# Central BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

121 CHARING CROSS RD LONDON BOOKS BOUGHT
FOYLES
BOOK SELLERS
CATALOGUE FREE
ALLOW MORE

# THE LORD'S COMMAND

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

EARTH'S EARLIEST AGES, AND THEIR CONNECTION WITH MODERN SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

*Ninth Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.*

THE GREAT PROPHECIES OF THE CENTURIES CONCERNING ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES. With Two Coloured Diagrams.

*Fifth Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.*

THE CHURCH, THE CHURCHES, AND THE MYSTERIES; OR, REVELATION AND CORRUPTION.

*Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.*

THEOSOPHY, BUDDHISM, AND SIGNS OF THE END.

*Crown 8vo, cloth, 1s.*

LONDON: HODDER AND STOUGHTON
27 PATERNOSTER ROW

# THE LORD'S COMMAND

A FEW WORDS ON BAPTISM IN THE FORM OF A REPLY TO A PAMPHLET ENTITLED "BAPTISM: POURING ON OR DIPPING IN?"

By G. H. PEMBER, M.A

LONDON: HODDER AND STOUGHTON 27 PATERNOSTER ROW 1904

LIBRARY
CENTRAL BAPTIST SEMINARY
KANSAS CITY 2, KANSAS

*Butler & Tanner The Selwood Printing Works Frome and London*

265.1
B394

# PREFACE

In a recent work on *The Church, the Churches, and the Mysteries*, we assumed that the root-meaning of the word "baptism" is "immersion," believing that the fact was universally admitted. We were, however, it would seem, mistaken; for we have since discovered that some have not yet ceased to dispute this truth; and, moreover, that certain other errors, which we had imagined to have disappeared, are still surviving among us. Hence this little volume has been written with four objects specially in view; namely, to exhibit by proof the real meaning of the word "baptism," to fix the interpretation of the rite so named, to distinguish between the baptism in water and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and to resolve certain alleged difficulties arising from God's dealings with infants and from the manner of their salvation.



37828

But, before we enter upon these subjects, it will be well to remark, generally, that most of the errors connected with baptism seem to have resulted from stereotyped mistakes in the interpretation of the rite. For, when, through their failure to grasp the spirit of the Covenant of Grace, men have assumed that baptism is what from its conditions it could not be, they can scarcely avoid serious error in their further treatment of it.

Perhaps, the earliest of all the mistakes to which we refer was the idea, that men are saved and made Christians by baptism, although the New Testament insists that they must believe, and so be saved, before they can be baptized. This error has been known as the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration; and, as soon as it was established, and had laid hold of men's minds, the next step, naturally enough, was to baptize infants. Then, some centuries later, the very form of baptism was changed, and sprinkling substituted for immersion. This, of course, could scarcely have been done, had not the true meaning of the rite been previously lost. For,

instead of being regarded, according to the Lord's intention, as a simple memorial and confession of the candidate's salvation, and of the manner in which it had been effected, the ordinance had been metamorphosed into the very means of that salvation. And with wondrous skill did the adversary avail himself of the change, which enabled him to divert attention from the great Lord Who bought us with His Blood, and to fix it upon what was now little more than a kind of magical rite.

But there are, also, other serious mistakes respecting the object of baptism; for instance, not a few believers understand it to be an ordinance for the dedication of infants to the Lord by their parents, or for the reception of such infants into one of the many professedly Christian sects upon earth—neither of which ideas is mentioned, or even hinted at, in the New Testament. Nevertheless, one—if not both—of them is regarded as an article of faith by many persons, whose whole view of baptism is thus distorted and confused.

We would take this opportunity of urging

upon clergymen of the Church of England the fact, that their own rubric directs them to immerse the subject of baptism. They are, therefore, able to carry out that part of the Lord's command; and so, at least, to preserve the figure of burial and resurrection with Himself, which He intended His ordinance to convey.

To infant-baptism they are, indeed, committed; and cannot refuse it so long as they remain in their Church. And yet, the custom is directly opposed, not only to the conditions of baptism as laid down by the Lord, but also to the whole spirit of the Covenant of Grace, which deals with those only who can understand and accept it, and sanctions no outward forms whatever, save as symbols and confessions of what has already been effected by spiritual power.

We may, however, assume that many true Evangelicals still remain in the State Church; and, should the process of Romanizing the latter continue, as at present, without check, these will soon find that the hour for decision has overtaken them, and that they must either abandon their position, or be content to drift before

the wind, and, after passing through the phases of Neo-evangelicalism, Catholicism, and Ritualism, to be wafted into the great harbour of the Apostate Church. Should they, then, adopt the first of these alternatives, and secede in numbers sufficient to form a Church of their own, it is to be hoped that they will, at least, allow the question of baptism to remain open, and not repel those who would otherwise sympathize with them, by insisting upon a custom which, however great their attachment to it, can neither be proved by Scripture nor supported by sub-Apostolic history.

# CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER I

Preliminary Remarks . . . . . 1

CHAPTER II

The Meaning of *Bapto* and *Baptizo* . . 13

CHAPTER III

The Verdict of History . . . . . 28

CHAPTER IV

The Argument from Mosaic Sprinklings . 45

CHAPTER V

The Argument from Joel ii. 28; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; and Isa. lii. 15 . . . . . 52

CHAPTER VI

The Argument from 1 Cor. x. 1, 2; 1 Pet. iii. 20–1 56

PAGE

CHAPTER VII

The Baptism of John . . . . . 65

CHAPTER VIII

The Baptism of the Three Thousand . . 80

CHAPTER IX

The Baptism of the Eunuch . . . 90

CHAPTER X

Burial with Christ in Baptism. Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 8–12 . . . . . 99

CHAPTER XI

Born out of Water and Spirit . . . 115

CHAPTER XII

The Subjects of Baptism . . . . . 120

CHAPTER XIII

A Problem and its Solution . . . 143

CHAPTER XIV

A Final Word . . . . . 169

# I

## PRELIMINARY REMARKS

It is with the greatest reluctance that we object to anything put forth by the author of the pamphlet before us, with whose work we have felt—as we do still feel—the most cordial sympathy for some seventeen years—indeed, ever since we came to know and understand it.

Nevertheless, loyalty to the dear Lord, Whom we desire to serve, constrains us to point out, even in the teachings of a friend, mistakes, which, in our judgment, are so serious as to involve the breach of a Divine command. And yet the duty to do so is rendered far more painful by the fact, that, so far as we can remember, we have been in the fullest agreement with every other utterance which it has been our privilege to hear from him.

Since, then, it is anything but a pleasure to be continually repeating the name of a friend whom one is compelled, for the moment, to oppose, we have elected to refer to the writer of *Baptism : Pouring on, or Dipping in ?* simply as "the author," that is, of the pamphlet under discussion.

Now, to many it may seem, that, in such a case as this, there is really no need to object at all ; for that the mode in which baptism is administered is surely a thing of little consequence, provided that the lesson intended to be conveyed by it be fully taught. And, were we dealing with matters purely human, we confess that an argument of this kind would have the greatest weight with us.

But we are quite unable to regard any command of the Lord, or any detail, however slight, of such command, as of trifling moment. For must there not be a more than sufficient reason for every direction that comes from His mouth ? And has He not declared, that He estimates our love for Himself by our obedience to His commandments ? Moreover, does not history,

as well as our own experience, teach us, that, if we deviate but a hair's breadth from the way which He has marked out in His Word, we know not into how disastrous a snare of the adversary we may be led?

While, then, we think but little of forms in themselves, we believe implicit and minute obedience to be imperative upon every servant of the Lord. How, indeed, could we dare to offer less to Him, Who loved us, and gave Himself for us!

Besides which, we must remember, that, when He commands a rite or ordinance, the instruction which He would impart is contained in its form, and must, therefore, either be distorted or altogether lost, if the figure which is to convey it be changed.

And of this our author himself affords us an example. For, as we shall presently see, he has failed to grasp the Scriptural meaning of baptism in water, and frequently confuses it with baptism in the Holy Spirit.

But, still further, he not only advocates an unscriptural form of baptism: he would also

have us to baptize unconscious infants—a practice which is not merely unknown in the New Testament, but is positively forbidden by its repeated declarations, that repentance and faith must precede immersion in water, if there is to be a valid baptism.

And, even as one error always leads the way to another, so it was by the introduction of this practice, in the third century, that Satan was enabled to establish and confirm, in the nominal Church, the pernicious doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, which is responsible for so much of the apathy and superstition of Christendom, and has afforded so effective a support to Sacerdotalism.

In his preliminary remarks, our author tells us, that some have had themselves immersed as believers without genuine conviction. Had this statement been made by a less truthful and less scrupulous writer, we might have been disposed to regard it as an attempt to throw dust into the eyes of the unwary ; for it has no possible bearing upon the correctness of immersion, which depends upon the command of the Lord,

and is not at all affected by the dishonesty, partial dishonesty, or imperfect conviction, of a few who have submitted to it. And what thing, right in itself, is there which has not sometimes been carried out from perverted and unworthy motives ?

In a similar vein, our author proceeds to speak of scholarly defenders of immersion as follows ;—

> "It must be borne in mind that most, it not all, have written *after* they had been immersed ; and although that would not affect their honesty, still it would not be surprising if they wrote with a bias, though unintentional."

This, again, is a very one-sided observation. What, we may ask, induced them to be immersed at a time when they could have had no such incitement as our author suggests ? Or does he mean to imply that immersionists are more prone to bias than those who advocate "pouring on" or "sprinkling" ? If he does, we must ask him to furnish us with proofs of his theory ; and, when these are forthcoming, we will consider them. But, until then, we shall be bold to affirm,

that there is far more probability of unintentional bias among those who sprinkle. For we have never yet heard of immersionists by genuine conviction passing over to the other side; whereas their own numbers are being continually increased by the accession of believers who have been brought up as Pedobaptists, either in the Established Church, or among Presbyterians, Wesleyans, or Congregationalists. And what prejudice is so powerful as that which we have imbibed from our earliest youth, are strongly attached to, because we have taught and acted upon it throughout our lives, and, in many cases, cannot surrender without loss of position, friends, and other interests?

More than once our author brings to the front the undoubted truth, that those who, like himself, sprinkle or pour on are a vast majority. We know it well; for, besides the Churches mentioned above, there are also the 200,000,000 of the Pope's subjects to swell the mighty multitudes among which he stands.

We are aware, too, that ours are times in which men teach, that everything must ultimately

be conceded to majorities. But here, as in so many cases, the people of God are compelled to differ from the world. For those who are instructed in His Word know, that, in spiritual matters, the majority is almost invariably in the wrong; and that believers in the Lord Jesus can never expect to prevail by numbers in an age whose Divinely revealed characteristic is, that few only will find the narrow path and enter in at the strait gate, and that the children of the Kingdom will be a little flock.

Our author remarks, that there is scholarship on either side of the question before us; but his assertion is only partially correct. For very few scholars have ventured to deny that *baptizo* [1] signifies to immerse, just as decidedly as *rhantizo* means to sprinkle, and *ekcheo* to pour out. And those who do so must either be very poor scholars, indeed, or men of so determined a prejudice that

[1] Since this book is intended for English readers, we have written all Greek and Hebrew words in English letters, so that any one may pronounce them. And, since it lays no claim to artistic finish, but aims simply at the instruction of believers in the Word of the Lord, we have not scrupled to repeat important things over and over again.

they are incapable of seeing the truth, if it should happen to be found without the pale of their own dogmas.

As an almost unique specimen of a scholarly defence of "sprinkling," we may point to the enormous work of Dr. J. W. Dale, of Pennsylvania, which occupies four large volumes. This writer was too good a scholar to deny the original and proper meaning of *baptizo*: he, therefore, endeavours—though without any reliable facts wherewith to support his theory—to make out that the word may have acquired a sort of technical meaning, becoming changed until it expressed nothing more than the exercise of an influence. And the following is suggested by him as the probable process whereby the change was effected. *Baptizo*, he says, denotes—

(1) Intusposition[1] without influence, just as a stone put into water remains unchanged.

[1] That is, a being placed within some other element or substance. A pedantic word, possibly coined by Dr. Dale, and meaning much the same as immersion, except, perhaps, that it might be more properly applied to enclosure within a solid, provided that the thing enclosed be surrounded on all sides.

(2) Intusposition with influence.

(3) Intusposition for influence.

(4) Influence without intusposition.

Hence he would have us believe, that the word may express the influence exercised by baptism without any reference to the mode of its administration! On this profane trifling with the Word of God, we simply remark, that, had it been put forth by an unlearned man, some excuse might have been found for it; but, as the proposition of a scholar, it can be condoned only on the plea of monomania.

While, however, it is impossible to find sane scholars who will deny its proper meaning to *baptizo*, many learned men have, undoubtedly, ranged themselves on the side of infant-baptism. But they have, for the most part, defended their position by arguments which our author would scarcely be willing to admit.

For instance, one of the best known of them, Dr. Wall, whose exhaustive work on the subject fills two bulky volumes, proceeds as follows;—

He proposes to trace infant-baptism to Apostolic times; but there is no mention of such a practice

either in the New Testament or in the writings of the earliest "Fathers." This somewhat serious deficiency of evidence he essays to supply by one of those round-about processes to which the defenders of false ideas are often reduced.

He quotes passages from the Scriptures and the sub-Apostolic "Fathers," in which it is affirmed, that man is tainted with original sin from the womb. Hence, he argues, all infants must be thus polluted; and, therefore, must perish, unless the pollution be removed. Naturally, the primal Christians felt the necessity of saving them; and, since in their case teaching was impossible, in what way could their cleansing be accomplished, save by baptism? Therefore, the primal Christians baptized infants.

But, to draw such an unsupported inference as this, is simply to beg the question, and that in the most barefaced manner. Moreover, the inference itself presupposes a very serious error, namely, that salvation is to be obtained by the mere ordinance of baptism. Were this true, then a logical defence of infant-baptism would be possible. It is, however, nothing more than a

human fabrication, for which no place is found in the Word of God.

For the Bible declares, that a responsible human being can be saved in no other way than by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that only he who has believed, and, therefore, is saved, can be baptized.

On the other hand, as regards the mode of salvation for beings who pass away in unconscious infancy, it is silent, and makes no direct revelation in a case in which it would be useless to do so. For even those who are in the fullest possession of their own senses and powers cannot teach spiritual things to infants, or in any way discipline them for the life to come. Therefore, the case of the latter must be left in the hands of the Great Saviour Himself, Who will not suffer His toil and precious blood-shedding on their behalf to be wasted, but will lead them through death into everlasting life.

Frank Newman, in his *Phases of Faith*, tells us that, when an undergraduate at Oxford, he was recommended to read Wall's volumes as a preparation for "Holy Orders." And his sense

of the logical failure of the work to prove its point, together with what he deemed the dishonesty of those who praised it, because it upheld their ecclesiastical ideas, is mentioned by him as one of the causes which drove him to scepticism.

How many have been thus driven to destruction, through the earthly-mindedness of those who wrest the Scriptures for their own purposes, will never be known, until the time comes for the Lord to bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and to reveal the counsels of all hearts. There are, however, it is to be feared, not a few professed believers who are so deceiving themselves that they set forth as Bible-truth that which their sectarian or personal bias has been continually adulterating, until it is no longer God's Word, but has become their own.

## II

## THE MEANING OF *BAPTO* AND *BAPTIZO*

So much, then, for our author's preliminary observations: we will now proceed to examine his arguments.

He begins his apology, very properly, by proposing to investigate the meaning of the two Greek verbs, *bapto* and *baptizo*, the latter of which, being merely a lengthened form of the other, is the word chosen to express the administration of baptism in the New Testament.

Now, the author frankly admits, that *bapto* signifies to "dip in" or "immerse"; and even adds that, had it been but once used of baptism, the question in dispute would have been pretty well decided in favour of immersion. Nevertheless, he cites a rendering in Rev. xix. 13 (R. V.), where—as he supposes—the perfect par-

ticiple passive of *bapto* is rendered by "sprinkled,"[1] instead of by "dipped," "soaked," or, far more probably, by "dyed."[2]

But the fact is, that the R.V. translators have adopted another reading, perhaps because it seemed to supply a literal rendering of the Hebrew verb *nazah*. The change, however, was not necessary on that account for the following reason. For, seeing that the New Testament is inspired as well as the Old, and that its quotations from the latter are often expressed in a manner differing greatly from the original, it is evident that, in such cases,

[2] While *bapto* always retains its fundamental meaning, that meaning is, of course, variously applied. Hence the word often signifies "to dye," because the thing to be dyed must be completely immersed in the trough. It is also used of the tempering of steel, in which the whole of the white-hot metal must be plunged into cold water.

the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to explain, to reveal another aspect of, to give an easy summary of, or, generally, to form a comment on, the truth cited from the more ancient Books.

Thus, in the present case—and here the best modern commentators agree—the expression "dyed with blood" is not a literal translation of any single word in Isaiah lxiii., but points generally to what we are told in the first three verses of that chapter. A glorious Being is seen to leave the cloudy heights above Bozrah, and to be moving majestically in the direction of Jerusalem. He is asked why there is red upon His apparel so that His garments are like those of one who has trodden the winepress. He replies, that He has been treading the winepress of His wrath, and that it is with the life-blood of the slain that His garments are splashed.[1] The reference is, of course, to that treading of the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God which is mentioned in

[1] The Hebrew *hizzah*—a causative form of *nazah*, is, perhaps, a rather stronger word than our sprinkle. "To spurt upon," or "to splash," would be a better rendering. But a little farther on we shall have to examine the word more particularly.

Rev. xiv. 20, and xix. 15. In Isa. lxiii. 6, the Lord says, "And I poured out their life-blood on the earth" (R.V.); while, in Rev. xiv. 20, we are told, that "there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs." There is, therefore, ample justification for either of the renderings—"dyed" or "splashed"—which we have suggested.

In regard, then, to the word *bapto*, there is little difference between the author and ourselves; but what does he say of *baptizo?* The moment he begins to deal with it, he loses all his definiteness and speaks most vaguely and strangely as follows:—

> "The word, of course, is Greek, and as the *mode* of Christian baptism is open to question, the word has been left untranslated; so that the word itself does not express the *mode* of baptism, but only the *state* or *condition* resulting from baptism, whatever the mode may have been, whether by dipping, by sprinkling, or by pouring."

It is difficult to catch the precise intention of

these words, seeing that we are supposed to find them favourable to our author's views, which we are altogether unable to do. But their general sense seems to be as follows;—

The translators of our Authorized Version did not give the English meaning of *baptizo*, but substituted for it an Anglicized form of the Greek verb; because they believed the mode of baptism to be an open question. That is to say, they were well aware, that, if the plain English of *baptizo* were made known, the question would be no longer open, but would be decided in favour of the immersionists.

Now, it is more than probable that this account is the true one; but of its significance our author appears to be wholly unconscious.

For, at the time when the Authorized Version was being prepared, the Church of England had just begun to adopt the Continental custom of baptism by sprinkling, in the place of her own rule, which had hitherto been baptism by immersion. The change was very popular; and hence the translators, who had been cautioned to respect prejudices, and knew well that *baptizo*

could be translated only by "immerse" or "dip," seem to have decided not to translate the word at all. For, although they could not alter the original meaning of Scripture by such a course, it would, at least, conceal that meaning from the people, and so prevent opposition to the new form of the rite.

But, if the Greek words *baptizo* and *baptisma* were to be simply Anglicized in form, and so placed in the English Version, it is obvious that this could be honourably done only upon a plain understanding, that they should retain their Greek signification, and be regarded as implying immersion.

For, in the present discussion, we have no concern whatever with such modifications of meaning as the words may have undergone in their Anglicized form, but have to deal exclusively with the sense in which they must be taken in the Greek original of the New Testament. And there, unquestionably, *baptizo* signifies "to immerse," and nothing but "to immerse." This is its proper meaning in the language to which it belongs; and, wherever we meet with it, in all

its applications, and whether it be used literally or figuratively, immersion is its underlying idea.

Were we writing an exhaustive treatise for the learned, we should now proceed to quote numerous passages from Greek authors in proof of our assertion. But such a course would be out of place in an essay intended for English readers. We must, therefore, endeavour to find a shorter and easier way of proof.

So we will turn to the Greek Lexicon which still maintains its position among us as the best, that of Liddell and Scott, and inquire what meanings it assigns to *baptizo*. The following list includes all that are mentioned in its Sixth Edition.

I. To dip in or under water; to sink ships. Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* iv. iii. 3), in his description of the crowds that flocked into Jerusalem at the time of the siege, says, "They baptized the city"; that is, they flooded, and, as it were, submerged it, with their multitudes. Passive. To bathe oneself by immersion or plunging into water; to be soaked [1]

[1] "To be drowned in wine" would be a much better

(with wine); to be over head and ears (in debt); to be drowned (with questions).

II. To draw wine from bowls in cups or ladles—of course, by dipping the latter into the wine.

III. Eccles. to baptize.

It will be evident, that the idea of immersion underlies all these applications. Some of the figurative uses are similar to our "immersed in business," "cares," "pleasures," etc.

If we now take up Schleusner's *Lexicon to the Septuagint*, we shall find the following to be the only meanings attributed to *baptizo*;—

*Active.* To immerse (immergo), to dip in (intingo). To immerse in calamities (im-

rendering, and more in accordance with the root-meaning of *baptizo*. The figure is used by Shakespeare in "Twelfth Night," Act i., scene 5.

*Olivia.* What's a drunken man like, fool?

*Clown.* Like a drowned man, a fool, and a madman: one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third drowns him.

*Baptizo* is sometimes used of literal drowning. It is also applied to the sun when he sinks into, and disappears beneath, the Western Ocean (*Orac. Sibyll.* v. 477).

mergere malis), or to strike with horror [1] (horrore percellere).

*Middle.* To immerse or bathe oneself. 2 Kings, v. 14, "He dipped himself seven times in the Jordan." So, in the *Wisdom of Sirach*, xxxi. 30, "If a man bathes himself [2] after contact with a corpse, and touches it again, what good does he get from his bath?"

*Passive.* To be immersed (immergor), or submerged (submergor).

Thus, both in the Classics and in the Septuagint, whether it is to be understood literally or figuratively, *baptizo* always retains the meaning, or the underlying meaning, of immersion.

And the same may be affirmed of its use by Philo Judaeus, Josephus, and in the Sibylline Oracles.

[1] "To flood," or "overwhelm," "with horror," would be a more correct translation.

[2] This bathing was, doubtless, an immersion in a pool, bath, or tank. The Mishna directs that, if it be done in a tank, the tank must be at least a cubit square, and not less than three and a half cubits deep; and then it adds, "Every thing that becomes unclean, whether man or inanimate things, can become clean again only by being dipped in water."

How, then, can Christian believers dare to tell us, that, although the Lord used a word which can only signify "to immerse," He really intended us to carry out His directions by "sprinkling" or "pouring on!"

Did He deliberately wish to confuse us?

Or was He forced to use *baptizo*, because there were no words to express "sprinkling," or "pouring on," in the Greek language?

We will leave anti-immersionists to answer the first of these questions; while we meet the second with an unqualified denial.

There are two Greek verbs which mean to sprinkle, *rhaino* (Num. xix. 4) and *rhantizo*, connected with each other in just the same way as *bapto* and *baptizo*.

Now, if we turn to the Septuagint, we shall find, that the sprinkling with the ashes of an heifer is expressed by *perirhaino*, while the same word is used for the sprinkling which purified the leper. And the preposition *peri* (around), prefixed to the Greek verb, intimates that the leper is to be sprinkled all round, before and behind, and not merely upon the face. And so was it to be with

him who was sprinkled with the ashes of an heifer.

Again; in the Septuagint version of Ezek. xxxvi. 25, where God declares that He will prepare Israel for the Millennial glory by sprinkling clean water upon them, and putting His Spirit into them, the simple verb *rhaino* is found.

But, when Paul speaks of the sprinkling with the ashes of an heifer, he uses the other verb *rhantizo*.[1]

Unquestionably, then, if the Lord had wished His ordinance to be performed by sprinkling, He would have used the New Testament word *rhantizo*.[1]

But He has used *baptizo* to immerse, and not *rhantizo* to sprinkle. Hence there is but one plain and honest inference; namely, that He commanded baptism by immersion, and not by sprinkling.

Again; in Joel ii. 28, we have the Lord's promise, "I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh." Now, in the Septuagint version of this passage, the Hebrew for "to pour out" is ren-

[1] Heb. ix. 13.

dered by *ekcheo*, followed by the preposition *epi* (upon). And, when the passage is quoted in the New Testament, we find the same verb and the same preposition.[1] Nor can we fail to notice how beautifully appropriate this expression is to the gift of the Spirit, Whose gracious influence is poured down upon us from above ; whereas we have ourselves to descend into the waters of baptism.

Thus, the Bible-phrase for "to pour out upon," is *ekcheo epi*. If, then, the Lord had intended the ordinance of water-baptism to be administered by "pouring on," He would have used that phrase.

But He has used *baptizo* to immerse, and not *ekcheo epi* "to pour out upon." Hence the only plain and honest inference is, that He commanded baptism by immersion, and not by pouring on.

There should, then, be no need to say another word on the subject : the truth is absolutely clear and certain. But we have been amazed, and moved to sorrowful pity, by the works of some of the few scholars who have striven to defend

[1] Acts ii. 17.

baptism by sprinkling or pouring on. For they have searched through the whole range of the Classics in their efforts to hunt up the very rare passages in which *baptizo* is used awkwardly, obscurely, or incorrectly, even as every word is sometimes used in every language. And they have paraded their scanty findings with an apparent confidence in the power of one or two dubious instances to set aside the numerous cases in which the disputed word unmistakably demands its real and well-known meaning! With how wondrously little evidence are men satisfied, provided only that the thing which they are seeking to prove be a desire of their own hearts!

But such men, with all their searching, have never, so far as we are aware, discovered a single passage by which they could prove that *baptizo* might have the sense either of "pouring on" or of "sprinkling." No; they can only struggle to make out, that, in one or two of its occurrences among hundreds, the word has slipped from its original meaning; and then, because of these few and dubious instances, they assume that the Lord, without a precedent in the Greek lan-

guage, chose to give an altogether new meaning to the word; so that it did not express the mode of baptism, but only its influence or results! Truly a tortuous and dishonest argument, well-beseeming to propagators of error, who are compelled to shun direct ways, and, if unhindered, would soon reduce the words of the Great Lord Himself to the level of Delphic oracles or of the talking oaks of Dodona.[1]

We are, then, unable to believe that our Lord, Who is the Truth, wished us to baptize by sprinkling or pouring on, and yet, in giving His commandment, avoided the Greek words which would have conveyed His intention, and deliberately chose one that indicated something quite different, that is to say, immersion. We need only add, that our author, although he promised us "a practical and honest examination of the meaning . . . of *baptizo*," has utterly failed to redeem

[1] Let it not for a moment be supposed that these and other similar remarks apply to our author. He is not a scholar, and, therefore, is not responsible for such mistakes as we have here indicated. Those whom we would censure are the scholars who have prostituted their talents to their ecclesiastical bias, and have, consequently, led others astray.

his promise. Indeed, he has not even attempted to investigate the word ; but, instead of doing so, has offered us the arbitrary assertion, that *baptizo* in itself does not express the mode of baptism ; and this assertion we have proved to be untrue.

## III

## THE VERDICT OF HISTORY

Now, in reference to the mode of baptism, there is another important point to be settled—a point upon which our author is silent. What have the history and literature of the Church to contribute to our inquiry, and that especially as to the way in which baptism was administered in the Apostolic or sub-Apostolic age? To this question we must endeavour to reply as briefly as possible.

The earliest Christian writers lived at a time when the Greek of our Lord's days was a spoken language. They, at least, could scarcely fail to know the true signification of *baptizo*. What, then, did they understand its import to be? With one accord they regarded it as indicating immersion, and believed that, with two exceptions, no baptism could be valid, unless the candidate had

been wholly immersed, so that the waters had momentarily closed over his head, and thus represented his burial with Christ. And the two cases in which they allowed affusion or aspersion—that is, in our author's terms, "pouring on" or "sprinkling"—were exceptions that most emphatically proved the rule.

The earliest uninspired Christian writing extant is, probably, the *Didache*, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, which seems to have been written between A.D. 80 and A.D. 100. Here are its directions in regard to Baptism;—

> "Now, concerning Baptism, baptize ye thus. Having first taught all that precedes,[1] baptize ye into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in running water.[2]

[1] That is, "The Two Ways," the Way of Life and the Way of Death, which are explained in the first six chapters of the *Didache*.

[2] We may note, that the early Christians preferred living or running water for baptism, and, until baptisteries were constructed in or near to the churches, were wont to conduct the candidates to a place where sufficient water of this description was to be found. The person to be baptized stood waist-deep in the stream, and his

> "And, if thou hast not running water, baptize into other water; and, if thou canst not in cold, then in warm.
>
> "But, if thou hast neither, pour water thrice upon the head into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." [1]

Now, the last sentence of this extract furnishes us with a conclusive proof, that, at the time when it was written, immersion was the recognized mode of baptism. For it expressly states, that affusion, or pouring on, was lawful only when the baptism took place in some desert or arid region, where water sufficient for immersion could not be found.

Subsequently, it appears that in one other case, also, affusion was permitted; namely, in that of clinical baptism, or baptism upon the bed of one who was seriously ill, and thought to be dying.

head was then bowed under the water by the baptizer. In the New Testament, however, there is no restriction as regards the kind of water to be used, and baptism seems to have been sometimes administered in reservoirs, tanks, or baths.

[1] *Didache*, vii. 1–3.

But there was a very general opinion, that such a baptism, though sufficient for salvation, did not confer the full privilege of a believer; and that one who had been so baptized, and was, therefore, called a clinic, was not eligible for "Holy Orders."

In the middle of the third century, we have a notable illustration of this feeling in the case of Novatian, who had received clinical baptism. For there was a strong opposition to his ordination, as we may learn by the following words taken from the Epistle of Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, to Fabius;—

> "This"—the ordination—"had been resisted by all the clergy and many of the laity; because it was not lawful that one who had been affused upon his bed on account of sickness, as he had been, should enter into any clerical office."

But Cyprian, in his Epistle to Magnus, repudiated the idea that clinical baptism by affusion or aspersion was incomplete, provided it had been duly administered with the authority of the Church.

Thus, these two exceptions to the ordinary mode

of baptism prove very conclusively, that immersion was the universal rule, and that affusion, or sprinkling, was allowed only when immersion was impossible.

The so-called "Fathers" are unanimous in their testimony to immersion. Chrysostom, for instance, speaks thus;—

> "In baptism are fulfilled the pledges of our covenant with God—burial and death, resurrection and life; and these take place all at once. For, when we immerse our heads in the water, the old man is buried as in a tomb below, and wholly sunk for ever: then, as we rise again, the new man rises in its stead. As it is easy for us to dip, and to lift our heads again; so is it easy for God to bury the old man, and to show forth the new." [1]

Similarly, in the Latin Church, Ambrose says;—

> "Thou wast asked, 'Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty?' And thou didst answer, 'I do believe;' and then thou wast immersed in water, that is, buried." [2]

[1] *Hom.* 25th, on the Gospel of St. John.
[2] *De Sacrament.* ii. vii. 20.

But it is useless to weary the reader by multiplying quotations. Even the two great advocates of Pedobaptism, Bingham and Wall, frankly admit that immersion was universally practised in the Church, until the Middle Ages. Dr. Wall adds ;—

> "This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that, as one cannot but pity the weak endeavours of such Pædobaptists as would maintain the negative of it, so also we ought to disown, and show a dislike of, the profane scoffs which some people give to the English Antipædobaptists merely for their use of dipping." [1]

In all the Eastern Churches, and in the Russian Orthodox Church, baptism is administered by immersion to this day, as it has been from the first establishment of Christianity.

> "There can be no question that the original form of baptism—the very meaning of the word—was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters ; and that, for at least four centuries, any other form was either unknown, or regarded, unless in the case of

[1] *Hist. of Infant-Baptism*, vol. ii. p. 384.

dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous, case. To this form the Eastern Church still rigidly adheres; and the most illustrious and venerable portion of it, that of the Byzantine Empire, absolutely repudiates and ignores any other mode of administration as essentially invalid." [1]

Here it may be well to notice two peculiarities of ancient baptism, though they do not very much affect our argument.

It was customary to divest catechumens, and to baptize them naked. There is, of course, no Scriptural warrant for this practice: the great point in the New Testament is, that the waters shall, for a moment, close over, and, as it were, bury, the person to be baptized; but to the Apostles it did not in the least degree matter whether candidates were clothed or naked. This human addition to the ordinance was said to symbolize the "stripping the neophyte, as it were, of his former life, and uncovering to the extremities all his habits within that life." [2] By

[1] Stanley's, *Eastern Church*, p. 29.
[2] Dion. Areop. *Eccl. Hier.* ii. 3.

some "Fathers" it is explained as an imitation of Adam's condition in Paradise, or of that of our Lord upon the Cross!

Then, again, it was customary, as it is to-day in the Eastern Church, to immerse three times. Probably, the first reason of this practice was to express faith in the Trinity; and, according to Ambrose, the candidate was asked successively whether he believed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and was immersed after each of his three answers. But, subsequently, when men began to realize more clearly that baptism represented the burial of the baptized person with Christ, another explanation was given, of which Gregory of Nyssa says;—

> "We cover ourselves in the water as the Saviour did in the earth; and this we do three times, to represent the grace of His resurrection performed after three days." [1]

But to immerse three times, raising up the candidate after each immersion, was a very awkward way of signifying the mystery of Christ's three days' burial; for He did not rise from the

[1] *De Bapt. Christi.*

dead at the end of each day, but only on the third day.

Thus, these two customs, the divestiture of the person to be baptized, and the trine immersion, are human inventions; while the explanations given of them are misty and unsatisfactory.

The passage from Stanley, quoted above, is continued as follows;—

> "The Latin Church, on the other hand, doubtless in deference to the requirements of a northern climate, to the change of manners, to the convenience of custom, has wholly altered the mode, preferring, as it would fairly say, mercy to sacrifice; and (with the two exceptions of the cathedral of Milan and the sect of the Baptists) a few drops of water are now the Western substitute for the threefold plunge into the rushing rivers or the wide baptisteries of the East." [1]

There can be little doubt that Dean Stanley has here pointed to the real motive for the change from immersion to sprinkling; but it is a motive by no

[1] *Eastern Chuch*, pp. 29, 30.

means creditable to the Western Church. At the battle of Balaclava, when the command to charge was brought to the Earl of Cardigan, that officer at once perceived the uselessness and disastrous folly of such an order. He, therefore, inquired whether there was not some mistake in regard to it. But, upon being assured by Captain Nolan that it was correct, he instantly gave the word to charge, and rode "into the valley of death" at the head of his six hundred. For, whatever the consequence might be, the Commander-in-chief had to be obeyed.

But this rule does not seem to obtain in the nominal Church. There the Great Commander's orders are obeyed, if they chance to be agreeable and convenient; otherwise, they are either ignored or changed. For there are many who say unto Him, "Lord, Lord," and do not the things which He has commanded. Of their fate, when He appears for judgment, He has Himself forewarned them.[1]

In the Latin Church, then, immersion continued to be the nominal rule until the thirteenth century

[1] Matt. vii. 21–3.

By that time the practice had become very lax, and pouring on, or sprinkling, was sanctioned by Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura, though both of these divines pronounced that immersion was the fitter and better mode. Apparently, it was an ecclesiastical reform that had prepared the way for the transition from immersion to sprinkling.

From the fourth century, dioceses had been divided into rural deaneries, and baptism was lawful only at the central church of each district, where the dean officiated. Within the enclosure of each of these baptism-churches a rotunda-shaped baptistery was erected, somewhat after the style of the Roman public baths, in the middle of the interior of which was the baptismal pool, or basin, surrounded by a row of pillars. Here there was ample accommodation for the large number of persons who were sometimes baptized together; for the rite was administered only at the great festivals, especially at Easter and Whitsuntide.

But, when, in the ninth century, the right of baptizing was conferred upon all the churches, it was, of course, impossible to build an expensive

baptistery adjoining the church in every little village; and, consequently, a font within the church was substituted for it, and was placed either on the left of the main entrance or at the point where the transepts crossed the nave. "This change," says Kurtz,[1] "necessitated the substitution of sprinkling for immersion."

From the ninth century, then, the practice of sprinkling began to spread, though very gradually, in the Roman Church; but it had not become general until the thirteenth.

Indeed, the question was not regarded as quite settled even in the days of Luther; and the great reformer made an effort to stem the tide of error, as the following extracts will show;—

> "The other thing which belongs to baptism is the sign, or the sacrament, which is immersion in water; from whence, also, it derives its name; for *baptizo* in Greek is *mergo* (to immerse) in Latin, and baptism is immersion. . . . Baptism is a sign both of death and resurrection. Being moved by this reason, I would have those who are to be

[1] *Church History*, § 88, 5.

baptized to be altogether dipped into the water, as the word doth express and the mystery doth signify; not because I think it necessary, but because it would be beautiful to have a full and perfect sign of so perfect and full a thing; as, also, without doubt, it was instituted by Christ." [1]

"The name baptism is Greek, in Latin it can be rendered *mersio*, immersion, when we immerse anything into water that it may be wholly covered with water. And, although that custom has now grown out of use with most persons—nor do they wholly submerge children, but only pour on a little water—yet they ought to be entirely immersed, and immediately drawn out; for this the etymology of the name seems to demand." [2]

The English Church, however, continued to immerse long after the practice had disappeared from the Continent. "With us," says Erasmus, "infants have the water poured on them, in England they are dipped." Both Edward VI. and

[1] *De Captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae.*
[2] *De Sacramento Baptismi.*

Queen Elizabeth were immersed; and, in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI., the priest is directed to dip the child three times—first the right side, then the left side, lastly the face.

But, during Elizabeth's reign, the custom of the English Church began to be changed, and baptism by sprinkling gradually became the rule, and has since continued to be so. For which change Dr. Wall finds three principal reasons, the first of which we give in his own words;—

> "It being allowed to weak children (though strong enough to be brought to church) to be baptized by affusion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and then by degrees the common people, would obtain the favour of the priest to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in the water. 'Especially' (as Mr. Walker observes), 'if some instance really were, or were but fancied and framed, of some child's taking cold, or being otherwise prejudiced, by its being dipped.'" [1]

These words are a good illustration of the way

[1] Wall's *Hist. of Infant-Baptism*, vol. ii. p. 399.

in which one error leads to another. Men must needs baptize infants, although their Lord appointed the ordinance only for those who had believed: then His prescribed mode of baptism was found to be unsuitable for the tender age of infancy, for which it was never intended; and so, the mode also must be altered, and sprinkling substituted for immersion. For the chief concern of those who have once begun to disobey is to fence their own course, and no longer to keep the commandments of Him Whom they profess to love.

Dr. Wall's second reason for the change is the influence of the many English divines who had fled to Germany, Switzerland, and other parts of the Continent, during the reign of Queen Mary, and had returned with an attachment to the customs of the Protestant Churches among which they had sojourned. For these Churches, although they had seceded from Rome, had retained the Roman mode of baptism.

Dr. Wall continues;—

> "And when there was added to all this the resolution of such a man as Dr. Whitaker,

> Regius Professor at Cambridge—'Though, in case of grown persons that are in health, I think dipping to be better; yet, in the case of infants, and of sickly people, I think sprinkling sufficient'—the inclination of the people, backed with these authorities, carried the practice against the rubric." [1]

The result, then, of our historical investigation is this. We have seen, that immersion was the universal practice of the ancient Church, sprinkling, or pouring on, being allowed only in cases of illness or of an absolute insufficiency of water; that the Eastern Church has retained it to this day; that the Western or Roman Catholic Church did not adopt pouring on or sprinkling until the thirteenth century; that, even then, the English branch of that Church refused to sanction the change, and administered baptism by immersion, until the Reformation; that the Reformed

[1] Wall's *Hist. of Infant-Baptism*, vol. ii. p. 401. The rubric in the Prayer-Book of the Church of England still requires dipping, except in case of weakness: so that any clergyman is at liberty to immerse, and thus to fulfil the Lord's command—so far, at least, as the mode of baptism is concerned.

Church of England continued to obey, and still owns, the rubric which makes dipping the rule and sprinkling the exception, permitted only in case of weakness or sickness ; but that the danger of immersion to infants—whom, however, the Lord had never commanded to be baptized—and the trouble and humiliation of it to adults, caused both the Lord's command and the rubric of the Church to be set aside ; so that sprinkling became the universal custom.

It is, then, very clear, that the advocates of pouring on or sprinkling can obtain no support whatever from history, the testimony of which is wholly on the other side.

## IV

## THE ARGUMENT FROM MOSAIC SPRINKLINGS

Our author now turns to the cases of sprinkling in Old Testament ceremonial, as practised upon the leper, and with the ashes of a red heifer ; and would have us infer, that, since sprinkling cleansed in the past Dispensation, there is no reason why it should not do so in the present. This argument is a mere blind, and quite inadmissible. Each of the Dispensations has its own distinct laws, binding, so far as they are distinct, only upon those who lived in it. In the Israelitish age, sprinkling was commanded, and the proper Hebrew term was used for it, which, again, was translated in the Septuagint by the corresponding Greek word, *rhaino* or *perirhaino*. But, in the New Testament, immersion is ordered, and is expressed by

*baptizo*, a verb which means to sink, dip, or immerse.

The fact, that Paul mentioned the sprinkling with the ashes of an heifer, when he was writing to Hebrews who were familiar with that ceremony,[1] cannot surely be allowed to interfere with a direct command of the Lord for the present Dispensation. Moreover, if we turn to the passage, we find that Paul is actually citing the ordinances of the Old Testament in order to point out their insufficiency and inferiority, as compared with those of the New.

These remarks apply with equal force to the priests' use of the laver for washing their hands and feet. That was their ordinance, and they had to keep it: immersion is ours, and we, too, must be obedient.

Our author now suggests, that, not circumcision, but the consecration of the Aaronic priests was "a type" of Christian baptism; or as he should rather have said, corresponded to Christian baptism.[2] But, if this were the case, the question

[1] Heb. ix. 13.

[2] For Christian baptism itself is no more than a figure; and surely we cannot have figures of figures, shadows of shadows.

at issue would be forthwith decided against him. For it is generally agreed among modern scholars, that the washing of Aaron and his sons, as recorded in Lev. viii. 6, was a bathing or washing of the whole body, from head to foot. And the richness of the Greek language enables us to see that this was, also, the opinion of the Septuagint-translators. For there are two Greek words to express the washing of living persons; of which the one (*louo*) means to bathe the whole body, especially in a bath, the other (*nipto*) to wash a part or parts of the body, as the hands, feet, face, etc.

Now, in the Septuagint, the first of these words is used in Exod. xxix, 4, and in Lev. viii. 6; the second in passages, such as Exod. xxx. 19, which speak of the priests washing their hands and feet daily at the laver. It is, therefore, clear, that the translators of the Septuagint Version understood the washing of the priests before consecration to be a complete immersion, or bathing, of the whole body.

But, setting this aside, there are two strong reasons, at least, which forbid us to regard the

consecration of the priests as the rite that corresponds to Christian baptism, and compel us to give that place to circumcision.

For, first, it was by circumcision, and not by consecration, that the admission of Abraham's seed to all the blessings and promises of the Covenant made with their father was formally recognized and confirmed.

Similarly, it is in baptism that the believer makes his first public profession of the fact that he has been saved by the death and burial of Christ, by passing in a figure through that which his Lord suffered for him in stern reality. And so, it is in his baptism that he is recognized, both by his fellows and by the world, as having been received into the Covenant of Grace. How true this is as regards the world can be seen most clearly in countries where the Lord's two ordinances have not, through long familiarity, sunk to the level of a meaningless formalism. For, in non-Christian lands, there is, as a rule, not much violent opposition to Scriptural instruction; but, if a converted native should venture upon baptism, hatred and bitter persecution lie before

him—a fact which, alas! has made many a missionary unfaithful to his Lord.

Thus, circumcision and baptism are both initiatory ordinances, the seals of admission into their respective Covenants; and, so far, they correspond. But, of course, the differing circumstances and terms of their Covenants render it impossible that there could be much similarity in their details.

One point of resemblance is, however, worthy of notice. It was commanded that a child should be circumcised on the eighth day of his life. And, since the eighth day, or first day after the seventh, represents the beginning of a new order of things, and, especially, resurrection, the meaning of this command seems to have been, that the promises to Israel could be fulfilled only after death and resurrection—a fact of which there is a plain statement in Ezek. xxxvii. 1–14.

Similarly, Christian baptism in water, provided that it be carried out in strict accordance with the Lord's command, is a figure of death and resurrection. And, apart from those comparatively few who will be found watching when the

Lord comes, no believer on Him can receive the fulness of the promises, until he shall first have passed through both of these crises.

In the second place, in Col. ii. 11, 12, Paul expressly teaches, that circumcision was the ordinance for which baptism was substituted; and he calls the latter "the circumcision without hands," or "the circumcision of Christ." He further notes, that in it we signify the putting off of the whole body of the sins of the flesh, and do not merely lay aside a small portion of it as in circumcision. This is well illustrated by the Lord's words in John vii. 23;—

> "If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses may not be broken, are ye angry at Me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?"

But we cannot pass on to the next section of our author's pamphlet without a protest against the kind of argument with which he has here striven to cover his weakness. He has nothing direct to say, because he is pleading against the plain declarations of Scripture; and so, he betakes

himself to the roundabout and unsatisfactory expedient of searching the Old Testament for ceremonies in which sprinkling, or partial washing, was used, and of inferring therefrom, that, since these two things were commanded in the Old Testament, they may also be used in Christian baptism. But, in the latter case, the Lord has commanded immersion: therefore, all such arguments are worse than useless; for they are directed against His word.

And even this is not all the mischief. For our author, in maintaining that Old Testament rites may be our guides in the Dispensation of Grace, is making a disastrous concession to our opponents. If we ask men of the English Romanizing party what authority they can show for their priests, their vestments, and their rites, they will promptly refer us to the Old Testament. Such things, they will say, were allowed, nay, even commanded, to the Jews: who, then, can forbid them to the Church? It is not well that we should encourage this party by imitating their policy. For these are they of whom the Lord has affirmed, that they "say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."

## V

## THE ARGUMENT FROM JOEL II. 28; EZEK. XXXVI. 25; AND ISA. LII. 15

Our author next invites us to notice the phrase which is used commonly in Scripture for the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

> "Is it not a *pouring upon* a person, and not a dipping of a person in the Holy Spirit? . . . I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh," etc.[1]
>
> * * * * * *
>
> "Is this phraseology used to inform us as to the manner in which the Spirit is given: or is it not rather phraseology taken from the manner in which water is applied in Christian baptism? We decidedly believe it is. If so, then pouring water upon a person is the mode of Christian baptism."

[1] Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17.

This is a strange argument. Christian baptism was instituted about A.D. 29, and Joel—who lived some 800 years before the birth of Christ—borrowed his phraseology from it! And hence pouring water upon a person is the proper mode of Christian baptism, although the Lord distinctly commanded that it should be administered by immersion.

No; like all assertions in the Bible which are not manifestly couched in figure, the phrase, "I will pour out My Spirit upon," is the clear and literal statement of a fact. For the baptism in the Spirit comes from God, and so is poured down upon us from on high: whereas, if we desire the baptism in water, we must, of our own free will, descend into the baptistery or the river, and bow our head beneath the flood; for the latter is administered by man, and not by God, and represents death and burial voluntarily shared with Christ.

Our author continues in a somewhat similar strain by quoting from Ezek. xxxvi. 25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." This, according to his belief,

proves, that the Scriptural mode of Christian baptism is by sprinkling, as well as by pouring upon. But, of course, the words cited are utterly irrelevant; for they refer to the preparation of Israel for the Millennium, after the return of the Lord, and have nothing whatever to do with our Dispensation. Besides which, the Lord has commanded us to practise immersion.

The words of Isaiah, which are the next to be cited—"So shall He sprinkle many nations"[1]—are a mistranslation. The Hebrew verb *nazah* properly means "to leap up" or "spurt." Hence the causative form, which occurs here, signifies to make to leap up, or spurt; and so *may* mean to sprinkle, provided it be followed by an accusative of the fluid, either expressed or understood, and the preposition *al* or *el* (upon) to connect it with the person who is sprinkled.[2]

But, in the passage before us, the construction is quite different. For "many nations" is the accusative to be taken directly after the verb, and there is no preposition, neither is there any

[1] Isa. lii. 15.

[2] Lev. xiv. 7; Num. xix. 4, 18, 19.

reference to water. We are, therefore, compelled to translate, "So shall He startle many nations," literally, "make them leap up (with terror)." And, by this correct rendering, we give full expression to the antithesis in the two verses [1] which describe the different effects to be produced upon men by the Lord's appearing at the First and at the Second Advent, respectively. At His First Coming, His visage was so marred and disfigured that men wondered how He could dare to present Himself as the Christ, the Son of God; for they were not sufficiently convinced of sin to discover, that it had pleased the Lord to bruise Him for their iniquities. But, when He suddenly reveals Himself in all the appalling glory of His Godhead, surrounded by the glittering armies of heaven, the nations will start backward with affright, and the kings of the earth become dumb before Him. There is, therefore, in this passage of Isaiah, no reference whatever to baptism.

[1] That is, in vv. 14 and 15.

## VI

## THE ARGUMENT FROM 1 COR. X. 1, 2, AND 1 PET. III. 20, 21

Our attention is next invited to two texts in the New Testament: first to 1 Cor. x. 1, 2;—

> "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

And then to 1 Pet. iii. 20–1;—

> "When the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God."

Upon which the author remarks;—

> "Both these passages teach baptism, but neither by immersion. The Lord miraculously divided the Red Sea to preserve His people from immersion. . . . Notice, the Israelites were *all* baptized: this included *the children* as well as men and women."

Now, as regards the first of these two remarks, if the passages teach baptism, they *must* teach it by immersion, because baptism signifies immersion. And, that the first of them does so teach it, we may very easily see. For why does Paul press upon our attention the fact, that the fathers "were all *under the cloud*, and all passed *through the sea*, and were all baptized unto Moses *in the cloud and in the sea*"? Of course, there can be but one answer. It was the passing under the cloud and through the sea that constituted the baptism, which was thus a total immersion in what might have seemed to be different elements, although both of them were really water. God did, indeed, preserve His people from fatal immersion by dividing the sea; yet as they passed between its watery walls, He caused His

cloud to descend just above them; so that, as they disappeared from sight within the sea and underneath the cloud, they were buried with Moses in baptism; but presently reappeared with him on the other shore.

Our author, however, seems to imagine that to be drenched is an essential part of baptism: whereas, in reality, it is a mere accident, and has nothing whatever to do with the type, which requires no more than the complete envelopment of the baptized by the waters, and his disappearance for a moment beneath them. And so, in the Power that stayed the forces of nature, and kept the waters from overwhelming the Israelites as they passed through the Red Sea, we discern a wondrous picture of the Lord of Glory leading His people, in perfect safety, through the stream of death. For never does He suffer the waters to overwhelm them; but accomplishes, to the fullest extent, the merciful purpose for which He took our nature upon Himself, namely, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage."

In his second remark, the author points out that, in the case of the Israelites, all the children passed through the sea, and were, therefore, baptized as well as the men and women. This is evidently intended as an argument in favour of infant-baptism, in the present age. But surely such a suggestion indicates an ignorance of that distinction of times, without which, as Augustine warns us, the Scriptures cannot be made to agree.

For, during the Israelitish Dispensation, every infant was born into the Covenant, because of the bare fact that he was a descendant of Abraham, whose imputed righteousness obtained the promises for all his seed, as well as for himself.[1] Hence every Israelitish infant, being a member of the Covenant, had a right to its seal, and was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. And, for the same reason, such infants could, of course, share in any baptism that might be commanded for Israel.

But with us it is altogether different. It is not in the course of nature that we are born into

[1] Gen. xiii. 15.

the Covenant of Grace; for that Covenant has one indispensable condition which an infant cannot fulfil. Nevertheless, if he die while still of tender age, we have no fear for him: we know that the Lord will save him by His precious Blood, though he be not in the Covenant of the visible Church on earth. But, if he lives and grows to an age of intelligence, and is able at length to say with truth, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," then he is born again, he has fulfilled the condition of the Covenant, and shouldat once, as a spiritual babe, receive its seal, which is baptism.

In regard to the figure of the Ark and the Flood as explained by Peter, our author again affirms that there was no immersion, and is again mistaken.

For, to produce the Deluge, all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the waters rising from below spread over everything, and bore up the Ark upon its surface; while, at the same time, the windows of heaven were opened, so that it rained for forty days and forty nights. Between these two waters, the one rising ever higher from below, the other descending from

above, the eight persons who were saved had to pass. All the other inhabitants of the world perished; for the waters were waters of death; but the eight escaped, because they were within the Ark. For its strong timbers, pitched within and without with pitch, prevented the entrance of the waters beneath them; while its top-covering turned off the floods that were descending from the heavens, so that they ran down its sides, and completely immersed, but could not penetrate it. And so, the Ark was a beautiful figure of Christ's righteousness, by which if we be covered, death cannot reach us.

But here we must demur to the translation of the R.V., which the author quotes, but which we believe to be both incorrect and tending to false doctrine. We would, therefore, prefer to adopt another meaning of the Greek word *antitupon*, and render, "which (water), also, in a correspondingly typical manner, now saves you, even baptism." That is to say, that both the Flood and baptism are corresponding types of our safe passage through the waters of death in Christ Jesus.

Our author again remarks;—

> "Let it be distinctly borne in mind, that baptism represents a state or condition into which a person is introduced by the use of water, representing the cleansing of the body, even as the Holy Spirit has given forgiveness and cleansing by His baptism of the soul."

Here there are, at least, four mistakes. (1) As we have already shown, baptism is not the state or condition into which a person is introduced, but is the act of immersion. (2) The word cannot be applied to the general use of water in any way, but only to its use for purposes of immersion or bathing. (3) It is not the Holy Spirit that grants forgiveness of sins, but God the Father, through the Blood of the Lord Jesus. (4) The baptism of the Spirit does not precede the baptism in water, but follows it. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, upon the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," is the Scriptural order.

It is true that there was one exception, and one only, to this rule, in the case of Cornelius

and his friends; but we are not allowed to found a doctrine on one passage of Scripture, unless we can find a second, at least, to corroborate it. And in this case we cannot do so, but can readily explain the necessity for the exceptional order, provided we remember, that, in those days, the baptism of the Spirit produced immediate and manifest effects that could be perceived by all men.

Now, the Jews who were with Peter were well acquainted with these effects, and had, probably, themselves experienced them, either at Pentecost or subsequently. Seeing, then, that they were rigidly opposed to the baptism in water of Gentiles, God suddenly baptized Cornelius and those who were with him in the Holy Spirit. And so, Peter was able to turn to his wondering companions, and say;—"Can any one forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Thus, the prejudice was broken, and the first Gentile converts were baptized in the presence of Jews.

Lastly; it is the Blood of Jesus Christ that

cleanses from sin: the waters of baptism do so only in type; and, moreover, the type is to be sought, not in their cleansing properties, but in the fact that our descent into them represents our burial with Christ, as a proof that we have died in Him. "For he that has died is justified from sin."[1] But the baptism in the Spirit is vouchsafed only to those who are already cleansed and raised to newness of life; for it has nothing whatever to do with death or burial, but is an enduement of the living with power.

[1] Rom. vi. 7.

## VII

## THE BAPTISM OF JOHN

We now come to our author's comments on the baptism of John, but are concerned only with his remarks on the words translated, "And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan."[1] This clause he would have us render, "And they were baptized of him with the river Jordan."

He appears to have no doubt that this arbitrary and, to a scholar, somewhat strange, translation is the correct one, and concludes as follows;—

> "Evidently the people were baptized *at* the Jordan, or, probably, standing in the water, while John baptized them with the water from the river Jordan."

Now, apparently, our author is not acquainted with Greek; but, for such criticism as he here

[1] Matt. iii. 5 (R.V.)

attempts, a long familiarity with that language is imperative.

The ground-meaning of the preposition *en* is precisely the same as that of the English "in"; and it is used with a dative case of place or time. It is true that it may, also, express the instrument with which a thing is effected, or the manner in which it is done. We cannot, however, adopt these last mentioned significations arbitrarily, when we choose, or for the purpose of proving a theory; but only when they are more appropriate than the ground-meaning. And, in this particular passage, seeing that the verb "to be immersed" precedes *en* with the name of a great river, it is certain that the sense must be, "And they were being immersed by him in the river Jordan." And this would be the case whether the words occurred in Classical or in Hellenistic Greek.

The same remark applies to the first clause of Matt. iii. 11; and also to the last clause of the same verse, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire." For the one passage in which baptism in the Holy Spirit is minutely described

affirms, that the influence descended, and filled all the house where the disciples were sitting :[1] it must, therefore, have completely immersed them, as, indeed, the word baptism itself implies.[2]

It is interesting to notice, that, in Mark i. 23, where our versions have "a man with an unclean spirit," the Greek is "a man in an unclean spirit." That is, the foul spirit was enveloping the man in its aura or effluvium, so that it formed the element in which he breathed and lived. Here, again, we have immersion in spirit, and, in this case, the spirit is evil. But the hasty and inaccurate rendering of our translators has obscured the real meaning of the expression.

We have already remarked, that our author imitates the Romanizing party in that he strives to force the impossible meaning of sprinkling upon the word "baptism," on the ground that, in Old Testament ceremonies, cleansing was sometimes effected by sprinkling ; and that, by so doing, he invites Romanizers to defend sacerdotalism, the sacrifice in the mass, and other anti-Christian ideas, in the same way. But now he

[1] Acts ii. 2. [2] Compare Acts i. 5.

follows the lead of the so-called "higher critics," and essays to prove, that a plain statement of Scripture involves so many difficulties, or even impossibilities, that we had better give it an unnatural meaning, and so rid ourselves of trouble. For he affirms it to be highly improbable that John could have immersed such multitudes as are recorded to have come to him.

> "He would need miraculous physical strength. Think of the size and weight of many men and women. Think of their being numbered by thousands, perhaps by tens of thousands. If immersed, were they immersed in their clothes, and sent back to Jerusalem and all parts of Judæa in their wet clothes? If they had a change of raiment, how could the men and women change their attire decently without separate tents, of which we have no account?"

Now, not one of these objections would cause a moment's thought to those who had considered the question in all its bearings; though some of them might, perhaps, seem formidable to uneducated Western minds.

For, in the first place, we have no need whatever to trouble ourselves with the amount of physical strength which John would have required to immerse so many persons, because it is certain that he never did immerse them with his own hands. He, doubtless, had assistants in any numbers that might have been necessary; and of some of these assistants we have definite information. For the Lord Himself rendered help in John's mission, and this is what we read;—

> "When, therefore, the Lord knew how that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judæa." [1]

From this short extract we learn, first, that a man was said to baptize when the actual rite was performed by the hands of his disciples. And, secondly, that, since the Lord shortly afterwards

[1] John iv. 1–3. In this baptism the Lord acted with John, and, consequently, ceased to baptize when John was removed. From the nature of its symbolism, His Own baptism could not, of course, have been instituted until He had risen from the dead.

selected first twelve and then seventy persons from the number of His disciples for special work, He would, probably, have had some fifty, at least, with Him at this time. On which supposition, He would have furnished John with fifty working assistants. Moreover, John had disciples of his own, who, also, were doubtless employed in the work of immersion. Then, again, John's baptism continued for some time. And, lastly, he did not baptize every person who came out to him.[1] So that, when all the circumstances are considered, it is clear that the immersion of the many thousands who appeared in the desert could have been accomplished easily, and without any need for supernatural strength.

The difficulty in regard to wet clothes is mere trifling. If men are in earnest, they quickly devise ways and means to meet slight inconveniences of that kind. Moreover, the scene of this occurrence was in Palestine, not in England: it took place in the early part of the first, and not in the twentieth century. And, yet again, those who live in warm countries are accustomed

[1] Luke vii. 30.

to bathe frequently, and care little for a wetting. Lastly, the people who were to be baptized may have stripped before they entered the water, or, more probably, would throw off the outer robe, and be immersed in the thin close-fitting tunic, which would quickly dry in the sun, and leave them none the worse.

As to the objection concerning the sexes, there certainly is no mention of separate tents, and, therefore, it will be better not to imagine them ; although it would have been no great task to set up a tent or two for the use of women, and to immerse the men at some little distance—behind a rising, or a thicket, or beyond a bend in the river—had such precautions been necessary. But, besides the tents, there is another thing of which we have no mention, and, therefore, had better not imagine ; and that is the presence of women at all. For there is not a hint in the New Testament that any women came to John's baptism.

But, as an illustration of the easy and natural way in which Orientals face matters that seem to our author so formidable and impossible, we

cannot do better than quote a passage from Lieut. W. F. Lynch's *Narrative*. In it he describes a wholesale baptism in the Jordan of members of the Eastern Church, witnessed by himself, as follows;—

> "At three A.M., we were aroused by the intelligence that the pilgrims were coming. Rising in haste, we beheld thousands of torchlights, with a dark mass beneath, moving rapidly over the hills. Striking our tents with precipitation, we hurriedly removed them and all our effects a short distance to the left. We had scarce finished when they were upon us: men, women, and children, mounted on camels, horses, mules, and donkeys, rushed impetuously by toward the bank. They presented the appearance of fugitives from a routed army. . . . The party which had disturbed us was the advanced guard of the great body of the pilgrims. At five, just at the dawn of day, the last crowd made its appearance, coming over the crest of a high ridge in one tumultuous and eager throng.

"In all the wild haste of a disorderly rout—Copts and Russians, Poles, Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians, from all parts of Asia, from Europe, from Africa, and from far-distant America—on they came; men, women, and children, of every age and hue, and in every variety of costume, talking, screaming, shouting, in almost every known language under the sun. Mounted as variously as those who had preceded them, many of the women and children were suspended in baskets, or confined in cages; and with their eyes strained toward the river, heedless of all intervening obstacles, they hurried eagerly forward, and dismounting in haste, and disrobing with precipitation, rushed down the bank, and threw themselves into the stream.

"They seemed to be absorbed by one impulsive feeling, and perfectly regardless of the observation of others. Each one plunged himself, or was dipped by another, three times below the surface in honour of the Trinity, and then filled a bottle or some

other utensil from the river. The bathing-dress of many of the pilgrims was a white gown with a black cross upon it. Most of them, as soon as they had dressed, cut branches either of the *Agnus castus* or willow, and, dipping them in the consecrated stream, bore them away as memorials of their visit.[1]

"In an hour they began to disappear, and in less than three hours the trodden surface of the lately crowded bank reflected no human shadow. The pageant disappeared as rapidly as it had approached, and left us once more the silence and the solitude of the wilderness. It was like a dream. An immense crowd of human beings

[1] Dean Stanley, in describing a similiar scene, writes as follows;—"They dismount, and set to work to perform their bath—most in the open space; some farther up amongst the thickets; some plunging in naked; most, however, with white dresses which they bring with them, and which, having been so used, are kept for their winding-sheets. . . . The families which have come on their single mule now bathe together with the utmost gravity; the father receiving from the mother the infant, which has been brought to receive the one immersion which will suffice for the rest of its life."

—said to be eight thousand, but I thought not so many—had passed and repassed before our tents, and left not a vestige behind them." [1]

The notion that, if a man was immersed in his clothes, the clothes were immersed and not the person, is a mere quibble. It is nowhere ruled that to enter the water in a state of nudity is essential to baptism. For, as we have already shown, the main idea of the rite is not that of cleansing by water, but of cleansing by death. The submersion beneath the water indicates burial as an acknowledgment of previous death; and the baptized passes in type through that which his Lord actually endured for him. Therefore, as we have before remarked, the cleansing is the cleansing of death; "for he that has died is justified from sin." [2]

Our author goes on to speak of an engraving, which he has often seen, of the baptism of the Lord by John;—

[1] Lynch's *Narrative*, pp. 260, *seq.* For this quotation I am indebted to the Rev. David B. Ford's *Studies on the Baptismal Question.*

[2] See p. 64.

> "Our Lord is represented as standing in the shallows of the river, whilst John is pouring water upon His head. This, we believe, was John's mode of baptism for the multitudes: just as the Holy Spirit like a dove came upon our Lord, so John took water from the river, and poured it upon the head of our Lord."

The engraving referred to was, probably, a copy or imitation of a Mediæval, that is, of a Roman Catholic, painting. And, in that case, its design came from the same source as the practice itself of baptism by sprinkling or pouring on. For, as we have already shown, that mode, in its general application, originated in the Papal Church. But Garucci explains a similar picture, from the Catacomb of Pope Callistus, as representing the confirmation which, in early times, followed immediately upon baptism—as soon, indeed, as the baptized person had been led out of the deeper waters in which he had been immersed.[1]

[1] In another very old picture, found in the same Catacomb, a boy is represented as standing in a shallow stream, and is, as Garucci says, "entirely immersed in a cloud of water," which the baptizer is throwing over

And in some old pictures of the Lord's baptism, in which the figures are standing in deep water, the position of John's hand upon the Lord's head appears to indicate neither pouring on nor confirmation; but is rather a preparation for immersing.

The incongruous idea, that John poured water upon the Lord, even as the Spirit descended upon Him, is refuted in what we have said above respecting the very diverse circumstances of the baptism in water and the baptism in the Spirit.

The author's attempt to elucidate the meaning of the preposition *en* by scrutinizing the English renderings of it, can only be characterized as hopeless. None but a competent Greek scholar can possibly discuss such a question. For how can one who is ignorant of a language be acquainted with the ground-meaning and general use of a particular word; or how is he to decide whether a given rendering be really incorrect, or whether

him. This looks like an attempt to carry out immersion where only a shallow stream, or pool, was available by making the candidate stand in it, and then pouring water over him so copiously that, for the moment, he was deluged with it.

[1] See pp. 24 and 53.

after all, the difference between English and Greek ideas and idioms may not have forced the translator to adopt a figure other than that which is found in the original?

To take an example from the instances quoted by our author: "to baptize *with* water," and "*with* the Holy Spirit," are simply incorrect renderings; since the Greek evidently indicates "*in* water," and "*in* the Holy Spirit."

On the other hand, in the English version of Rom. xii. 8—"He that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness"—the rendering of *en* by "with" is really an accommodation to English ideas. For, in such phrases, we regard "liberality," "diligence," and "cheerfulness," as the companions and assistants of those who give, or rule, or show mercy. But the figure in the mind of a Greek would have been altogether different. He would have conceived of a man as giving "in liberality," that is, as if liberality were the element in which he gave, just as air was the element in which he breathed. Thus, it will be seen that, in Rom.

xii. 8, the preposition *en* preserves its ground-meaning, although our mode of thought does not permit us to translate it literally. We might cite many similar examples ; but one is sufficient to show the absolute uncertainty of such a method of investigation as our author would substitute for a knowledge of the Greek language.

We may, then, without hesitation affirm, that there are no difficulties whatever in the plain statement of Scripture, that John immersed the multitudes which kept coming to him. Yet, had there been real difficulties, and those ever so great, we must still have believed them to have been surmounted ; for the Scripture cannot be broken, and in this passage it uses a word which signifies to immerse, and only to immerse. But, as a matter of fact, all the suggested objections are mere fancies, children born of an imperfect knowledge of the circumstances and language and of a desire to find some excuse for pouring on or sprinkling.

## VIII

## THE BAPTISM OF THE THREE THOUSAND

In the texts which he quotes from the inspired account of the Pentecostal mission, our author appears to be preparing us for his subsequent defence of infant-baptism. We will, however, defer our remarks on that subject, until we come to the section of his work in which he openly discusses it.

But it is with deep sorrow that we consider the question raised in his next sentence. For he there suggests, that the recorded baptism of the three thousand may not have been a water-baptism at all, but a baptism in the Spirit only, in fulfilment of the promise, "Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

Such teaching as this would soon lead to a total disregard of baptism in water, and so

confirm and spread the errors of the Friends, the Salvation Army, and others. And it is, also, wholly inadmissible for the following five reasons;—

1. *Baptizo* is often used absolutely of water-baptism, but never refers to the baptism in the Spirit, except where such a reference is plainly indicated by the context.

2. The promise of baptism in the Holy Ghost had been fulfilled, to those to whom it was given, before the conversion of the three thousand.

3. The invariable practice of the Apostles was to baptize believers in water, as soon as possible after conversion.

4. The case of Cornelius and his friends proves, that baptism in water, having been commanded by the Lord, could not be dispensed with, even when the converts had already been baptized in the Holy Ghost.

5. And, lastly, Peter's appeal to the Jews, to repent and be baptized with a view to the remission of their sins [1], must refer to

[1] Acts ii. 38.

baptism in water, because it distinctly specifies what is symbolized by that ordinance. Moreover, it declares that the promise of the Spirit, that is, the baptism in the Spirit,[1] can be received only by those who have previously repented, and given proof of their faith and obedience by submitting to baptism in water.

For baptism in the Spirit is not directly concerned with repentance and forgiveness of sins through death with Christ, but is bestowed from on high upon one already pardoned, and spiritually quickened, to whom it becomes a mighty enduement with power and with the gift, or gifts, by means of which he is to testify upon earth for the Lord Jesus, and which, if he has used them aright here below, he will take with him for more glorious service in the World to Come.[2]

Thus, the Pentecostal baptism of the three thousand was a baptism in water, carried out by the Apostles and other disciples who were with them, in obedience to the Lord's commandment.[3]

[1] Comp. vv. 4 and 5 of Acts i.
[2] Matt. xxv, 21, 23, 28. [3] Matt. xxviii. 19.

The promise, "Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence," had been, of course, fulfilled to those to whom it was originally given by the previous descent of the Spirit upon the hundred and twenty believers who were in the house. And there can be little doubt that it was also fulfilled, in due course, in the case of the three thousand, although there is no record of this in the "Acts."

We deeply regret the next objection;—

> "How could these three thousand have been immersed in Jerusalem? There was no river there. The water in Jerusalem was chiefly stored in tanks for household purposes, and it is scarcely likely that people would be dipped in water stored for family use. It seems to us next to absolute certainty, that, if they were baptized with water at all, it must have been by sprinkling or pouring."

Now, had our author taken the trouble to procure information respecting the ancient water-supply of Jerusalem, such as he might have obtained from Sir Charles Warren's *Underground*

*Jerusalem*, or other books of the kind, he would never have written such a paragraph as the above. For it is probable that no city of antiquity was more abundantly furnished with water than Jerusalem, the pools and reservoirs and cisterns of which were well able to meet the needs of the great multitudes that flocked to its Passover and other festivals, as well as the enormously increased Temple-requirements during such seasons.

To begin with its public pools—which were provided with steps, so that one could descend to the water—that of Hezekiah is about 250 feet long and 150 in breadth ; the upper Gihon is 300 feet long and 200 broad ; while the lower is some 600 feet long and 250 broad. The Pool of Siloam is about 50 feet long and 20 wide. This is connected by a tunnel with what is now called "the Fountain of the Virgin," or sometimes, "the Fountain of Siloam," as distinguished from the Pool of that name. Here the flow of water is intermittent, and Conder gives us the following curious piece of information respecting it ;—

"Every day crowds of both sexes go down

> to the spring, and, entering the dark archway, descend the steps, and await the fitful troubling of the waters, which rise suddenly, and immerse them, fully clothed, nearly up to the neck." [1]

This passage is very instructive in view of some of our author's objections. It at once disposes of his difficulties respecting sex and wet clothes,[2] reminding us, as it does, that the climate, customs, and feelings, of Eastern people are very different from our own.

We have yet to notice the Pool of Bethesda, of which Thomson says ;—

> "I looked in upon the vast chasm, or fosse, on the north side of the Temple-area, which I hear called Birket Israil, and see on the maps written Bethesda." [3]

This pool was found by Robinson to be 360 feet in length, 135 in breadth, and 75 in depth. By measuring under the arches he added 100 feet to its length ; but could not tell how much farther it extended.

[1] *Tent Work in Palestine*, vol. i. pp. 313-14.
[2] See pp. 70 & 71. [3] *The Land and the Book*, p. 656.

Thomson also speaks of another considerable pool just outside St. Stephen's Gate, which is now called the Birket sitti Myriam; and we might yet add to this list. The pools already mentioned would, however, have been amply sufficient for the immersion of many thousands of persons in one day.

But, in addition to the pools, there were, also, the great underground reservoirs, or cisterns, of vast size, of which those that have been discovered under the Temple-area alone would, according to Sir Charles Wilson's calculations, be capable of storing more than 10,000,000 gallons—a sufficient quantity to supply all the needs of Jerusalem for a whole year. One of these subterranean pools, known as the Great Sea, and cut out of the solid rock, is stated by Barclay to be "736 feet in circuit and 42 in depth," with a capacity for holding about 2,000,000 gallons. According to the picture of a portion of it, as given in Van Lennep's *Bible Lands*, there is a fine broad walk by the side of the water.

Lastly; there were the domestic cisterns, which were, however, on a very different scale

from that to which we are accustomed. Thomson speaks of them as follows;—

"The main dependence for a constant and convenient supply of water is, and always has been, I suppose, the domestic cisterns. Every house has one or more; so has every church, mosque, convent, castle, and bath. . . . The house I first rented in Jerusalem had three cisterns; that of Mr. Lanneau, my missionary associate, had four; and two of his were very large.

"No fact in relation to this country is better attested than the extreme antiquity of cisterns, and nothing about old sites has so much surprised me as the immense number of them. Often, where every trace of buildings has disappeared, the whole site is perforated with these underground reservoirs.

"Neither Beer 'Ayub, nor the Fountain of Mary, nor any of these vast pools, nor the aqueduct from beyond Bethlehem, would be much needed, except for the Temple-service, and during the grand convocation

> of the Tribes in their annual festivals. Jerusalem was so abundantly supplied with water that no inconvenience from this source was experienced even during the many and long sieges which the city sustained. The people perished from famine, not from thirst." [1]

Dr. Thomson thinks that many of these pools and underground reservoirs, both public and domestic, date from the time of Solomon and his immediate successors; and that others had to be constructed, or quarried out, to supply the place of "all the fountains which were without the city, and the brook that flowed through the midst of the land," which Hezekiah found it necessary to stop—a work that required the gathering together of much people.[2]

Our author's objection, that the Pentecostal converts would scarcely have been "dipped in water stored for family use," is easily met by the fact that there were commonly three or four tanks in each house. Of these, one would, doubt-

[1] *The Land and the Book*, p. 656.
[2] 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4.

less, be kept for drinking or for cooking purposes; while the others would be necessary for baths, and for the numerous ceremonial washings, both of human beings and of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and couches,[1] which either the Mosaic law or the Rabbinical tradition demanded. And, since the Rabbis tell us that a man who needed purification must be completely immersed, there can be little doubt that one of the tanks in a house would be prepared and reserved for this very purpose.

But the evidence which we have now laid before the reader is enough, and will enable him to see the futility of the objection to the baptism of the three thousand on the ground, that the water-supply of Jerusalem would not have sufficed for their immersion.

[1] Mark vii. 4.

## IX

## THE BAPTISM OF THE EUNUCH

Our author's strictures on the baptism of the eunuch come next in order ; and we may remark by the way, that the man could scarcely have been a Jew ; for the narrative tells us plainly that he was an Ethiopian. He was, however, most probably a proselyte ; and it is likely that he was reading Isaiah in the Greek version, which was then in common use—Greek being, at the time, the language of literature throughout the civilized world.

In his attempt to prove, that the eunuch must have been baptized either by sprinkling or pouring on, our author first argues, that there was no water, in which immersion could possibly have been effected, on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza ; or, at least, in that part of it which was

called desert. But, in regard to this statement, Palestinian explorers do not seem to agree with him.

It will, however, be well before we cite their opinions to remark, that, in the New Testament, a desert—*eremos*—is not necessarily a waterless region, but merely a district in which there are few or no human habitations, and which is often used for pasture.

Now there were, at least, two routes from Jerusalem to Gaza ; and Dr. Thomson, assuming that Philip started from Samaria, which is all but certain, remarks, that, if the eunuch came by the Wady Sûrar, the evangelist would probably have met him somewhere south-west of Latron ; and then continues ; —

> " There is a fine stream of water, called Murubbah, deep enough even in June to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends. This Murubbah is merely a local name for the great Wady Sûrar, given to it on account of copious fountains which supply it with water during summer. Above them —that is, the fountains—the Wady was

> entirely dry in the month of April, at which time the transaction took place, I suppose." [1]

If, then, the eunuch was proceeding by the Wady Sûrar, his immersion might have taken place in that part of the stream which is now called Murubbah. But, very possibly, he may have chosen a different route.

> "Besides the ordinary road from Jerusalem by Ramleh to Gaza, there was another, more favourable for carriages, farther to the south, through Hebron, and thence through a district comparatively without towns, and much exposed to the incursions of people from the desert. . . . Robinson . . . suggests a very probable place for the baptism, viz., at the water in the Wady-el-Hasy between Eleutheropolis and Gaza, not far from the old sites of Lachish and Eglon." [2]

It would seem, then, that no difficulty need be raised in regard to a sufficiency of water for immersion on either of the two main roads from Jerusalem to Gaza. And, even if we could not

[1] *The Land and the Book*, p. 536.

[2] Dean Howson, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, sub v. Gaza.

find any water to-day on these routes, it would by no means follow that there was none eighteen hundred and fifty years ago. Moreover, of one thing we are certain : the Bible distinctly affirms that the eunuch was immersed—for, in those days, at least, *baptizo* could mean nothing else. Therefore, we believe its statement, and we are not to be moved from our faith by any stratagems of the sadly misnamed " higher criticism."

In regard to the Greek verb for " to go down," we have here a baptismal scene, and the same word is used by the " Fathers " to signify the descent into the baptismal waters.

The proper meaning of the preposition *eis* is " into ; " though it is also used to signify " in the direction of ; " or, " with a view to," " for the purpose of ; " but neither of the latter meanings would suit the passage before us.

We have already remarked upon the futility of our author's attempts to get at the meaning of Greek prepositions by an appeal to their various English renderings. In the present case, such of his examples as are at all to the point make against his own argument. For they merely

prove, that the English have a way of using "to" when they mean "into."

"Go thou to the sea, and cast a hook." Now, if Peter had merely gone to the edge of the shore, he would have had little chance of catching anything. But the preposition *eis* implies, of course, that he was to put out to sea in his boat.

"Jesus going up to Jerusalem." Does the phrase mean that our Lord was going as far as the wall of Jerusalem, and then intended to return; or are we to understand that He meant to enter into the city?

"One to his farm."[1] If this man went only to the boundary of his farm, and then came back again, the example would answer the purpose for which it was quoted; but, if he entered the farm, and there transacted any business that might have been awaiting him, then the English "to" is again used for "into," and the meaning of the Greek *eis* is not affected.

And so we might explain all our author's examples, except two. For "Betrayed to be crucified"[2] is an expression of another and very

[1] Matt. xxii. 5. [2] Matt. xxvi. 2.

frequent kind, in which *eis* is used before the neuter of the article and an infinitive, and must be translated, "with a view to," or, "for the purpose of."

Again, in the original of the words, "Philip was found at Azotus," [1] *eis* retains its ordinary meaning, the rendering "at" being merely an accommodation to our way of speaking. In the Greek, there is what is called a pregnant construction; and, "Philip was found into Azotus," is an abbreviated expression for "Philip was (conveyed) into Azotus (and) found (there)." This may appear strange to us, but it is a common Greek idiom.

Thus, then, both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, the former to immerse, the latter to be immersed. Our author's assertion, that they are said to have gone down merely "because in the chariot they were higher than the water," is an imagination of his own. Moreover, we have no hint that there was any bank to descend, and, if there were, *eis to hudor* would still mean "into the water."

[1] Acts viii. 40.

In his remarks on the preposition *ek*, the author again follows the same extraordinary and deceptive plan of explaining the word by its renderings in the English version. But all that he succeeds in proving is, that Greek is a more minutely correct language than English.

For the root-meaning of *ek* is "from out of," "out from among," or "out from the midst;" and that is its real signification in all the examples cited by him. It has been well said, that, while *apo* means "from the outside," *ek* signifies "from the inside."

But let us examine our author's quotations.

"From the uttermost parts of the earth."[1] If one comes from—*ek*—the uttermost parts of the earth, he must be within those parts at the start, and, therefore, has to come out of them.

"Have I kept from my youth."[2] If one has kept commandments from—*ek*—his youth, he was in youth when he commenced to keep them.

"Departing from the coasts of Tyre." If our Lord departed from—*ek*—the coasts of Tyre, it

[1] Matt. xii. 42. [2] Matt. xix. 20.

was because He had previously entered into them. See Mark vii. 24 and 31. But why does our author in this instance quote from the Authorized Version? For the Revised correctly translates, "And again He went *out from* the borders of Tyre."

"Roll us away the stone from the door."[1] If the stone was to be rolled away from—*ek*—the door, the choice of the Greek preposition indicates that a part, at least, of the stone had been pushed into the aperture which formed the entrance to the tomb.

Again, in the expression, "Saved from"—*ek*—"our enemies,"[2] the precise sense of the original is, "saved out of the midst of our enemies."

And so we might go on to the end of the list, and then with justice inquire, "Why are we to deny its proper meaning to *ek* in the particular passage under discussion? No reason whatever could be given for such a course, save that it would be convenient to the advocates of pouring on or sprinkling. That, however, is a plea which no sincere lover of the truth could accept. We

[1] Mark. xvi. 3. [2] Luke i. 71.

may, then, with confidence assert, that both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and, consequently, when the immersion had been effected, had to come up out of the water.

But, before quitting the subject, it may be as well to ask this question. If baptism by pouring on, or sprinkling, had been contemplated, what necessity was there to look out for water at all? The eunuch was a high minister of state, and, doubtless, travelled with a large retinue, as became his rank: indeed, he would have required a considerable escort in a journey to Gaza by the desert road; for it was infested by robbers. And so, several skins of water must have been carried in his train for use on the way. Why, then, could he not have sent for a pitcher of this pure drinking water, which would have been amply sufficient for either sprinkling or pouring on?

And the answer is, Because in those days, when the Greek of the New Testament was a spoken language, such an act as pouring on, or sprinkling, could not possibly have been regarded as a fulfilment of the command to baptize.

## X

## BURIAL WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM

### Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 8–12

The next passage presented by our author for consideration is Rom. vi. 3, 4.

Here Paul has just been saying, that, through the love of God in Christ Jesus, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Then he supposes the objection to be raised;—Well, then; if that be the case, should we not continue in sin, that grace may continue to abound? Certainly not, he replies. You who died to sin, how can you still live in it? Or are you actually ignorant of the fact, that those of us who were immersed into Christ were immersed into His death? For had we not at our conversion, and before our baptism, admitted that we were dead by reason of trespasses and sins? And had we not accepted with rejoicing God's offer to reckon

us as having died to sin and the world in Christ, in order that we might be raised in Him to a new spiritual life, in which both sin and the sinful world are held in abhorrence ?

And did we not then obey His command, and make a public profession of our salvation in Him, by presenting ourselves as dead persons to be buried, in a figure, with Him by passing under the waters of baptism ?

If, then, we have made such a confession of our natural condition, and given such a public testimony to our salvation from sin through the death of the Lord Jesus and our own death in Him, how can we still continue in sin ?

Such is the argument ; and, so far as our present purpose is concerned, we have no need to examine the remainder of the passage. We will, therefore, only remark, that in it Paul shows the results of that reality of which baptism, with its immersion and emersion, is but a figure.

Nevertheless, the figure is one which the Lord has commanded every believer to set before the world, in his own person, immediately after his conversion, and which, consequently, must

on no account be omitted by those who wish to meet Him with joy, and not with grief. But what, we ask, have the advocates of pouring on, or sprinkling, to substitute for the immersion and emersion which correspond to death and resurrection with Christ? And how can they explain a passage, the figure of which, the being buried with Christ, so unmistakably points to immersion?

Our author vainly strives to cut the knot, by affirming that Paul's reference is to baptism in the Spirit, and not to baptism in water. Such an assertion, however, simply shows that he has not grasped the meaning of baptism in the Spirit; but, apparently, confuses it with another operation which is, also, attributed to Him in the New Testament.

For He it is Who first moves the sinner to repentance by convicting him of sin and of righteousness and of judgment, and so prepares him to receive the Gift of God, and to rejoice that his sins are expiated in the Blood of the Lord Jesus, and that everlasting life has been freely given to him. Such is the first operation of the

Spirit, and it is represented and confessed by baptism in water.

But, though all this may have been accomplished, the man, nevertheless, has not yet been baptized in the Spirit. He is, indeed, accepted and saved, but is still lacking in spiritual power. Intellectual power he may possibly have, nay, even a persuasive eloquence, whereby he can bend the minds of men hither and thither at his will. But his gift is not spiritual, and, therefore, not saving and permanent in its effects.

If, however, it pleases the Lord to vouchsafe the baptism in the Spirit, the result is the man's investment with Divine power: henceforth the Spirit of God works through him: he is now a spiritual or inspired man, endued with one, at least, of the gifts which the Lord Jesus, when He ascended on high, received for men.

It will thus be evident, that the baptism in the Spirit has nothing to do with death and burial, or with the dead. It is only upon the living that it can take effect. It is upon those who are already in possession of life that it is poured, and it causes them to have that life more abun-

dantly. The Spirit of power comes upon them: henceforth they are able to be fellow-workers with God: they go out into the Harvest as duly appointed and fully qualified labourers, permitted to assist the Lord Jesus in His gracious and loving work of gathering into one the children of God that are scattered abroad.

Such, then, are the two operations of the Spirit. And we seem to have an illustration of them in the Lord's bestowal of that Spirit upon His disciples as contrasted with their baptism in the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

During His life-time upon earth, we may suppose that He sustained their faith by His Personal Presence with them.[1] But, when the time drew near for His departure, and necessity was about to be laid upon them to believe in Him without seeing Him, even as they believed in the invisible God, He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit."[2] And this gift seems to have corresponded with the Spirit's first operation, when He gives faith to believe, but does not add

[1] "For the Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified," John vii. 39.

[2] John xx. 22.

power to act upon others. And so, the disciples were not permitted to enter forthwith upon the great mission with which He had charged them; but were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem, until they had received power from on high by that immersion in Spirit which they were to experience before many days. In due time, the mysterious power descended upon them like a rushing mighty wind, filling all the house where they were sitting;[1] and each disciple immediately felt that he was equipped for his work, and could do all things through Christ Which strengthened him.

Thus, in the passage which we are considering,[2] the connection of baptism with death and burial at once certifies us that the reference is to baptism in water. And, indeed, whenever baptism is mentioned without further explanation, it is always the baptism in water that is contemplated. This is true even of such a figurative use of the word as the Lord adopts when He says, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

[1] Acts ii. 2. [2] Rom. vi. 3, 4.

For the figure is taken from the disappearing of one who is being baptized beneath the waters that represent death and burial.

In vain does our author strive to press home his point by urging, that "there is here no mention of water or water-baptism;" for he seems to have altogether ignored the fact, that there is, also, no mention of the Spirit or of baptism in the Spirit.

His assertion, that baptism in water cannot produce a resurrection-life, is superfluous; for no enlightened believer has ever imagined that it could do so. As we have said above, the ordinance is nothing more than a confession and type of a reality which must have *previously* taken place, or there can be no valid baptism.

Again, in Col. ii. 8–12, the reference is even more emphatically to baptism in water; for the latter is made to correspond with circumcision—the initiatory right of Christianity with the initiatory rite of the Covenant of Works. But the late Bishop Lightfoot has given a paraphrase of the particular verses, in this passage, with which we are concerned, so clear and accurate that we

will quote it, instead of adding an explanation of our own;—

> "Be on your guard; do not suffer yourselves to fall a prey to certain persons who would lead you captive by a hollow and deceitful system, which they call philosophy. They substitute the traditions of men for the truth of God. They enforce an elementary discipline of mundane ordinances fit only for children. Theirs is not the Gospel of Christ. In Christ the entire fulness of the Godhead abides for ever, having united itself with man by taking a human body. And so in Him—not in any inferior mediators—ye have your life, your being; for ye are filled from His fulness. He, I say, is the Head over all spiritual beings—call them principalities, or powers, or what you will. In Him, too, ye have the true circumcision—the circumcision which is not made with hands, but wrought by the Spirit—the circumcision which divests, not of a part only, but of the whole carnal body—the circumcision which is not of Moses, but of Christ.

> This circumcision ye have, because ye were buried with Christ to your old selves beneath the baptismal waters, and were raised with Him from those same waters to a new and regenerate life, through your faith in the powerful working of God, Who raised Him from the dead." [1]

In this paraphrase, and in our own comments on the parallel passage in the Epistle to the Romans, the most of our author's arguments have been fully answered. But we must confess to surprise at the inaccuracy of his remark, that the sinner is "baptized into all the benefits of the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ" by the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Surely every sinner obtains the benefits of Christ's atonement at the moment in which he believes in Him, and, consequently, receives eternal life. After that comes the baptism in water; and only then—provided there be no hindrance—the baptism in the Spirit.

Very futile, too, is the statement, that, even if the words, "buried with Him in baptism,"

[1] Lightfoot's *Colossians and Philemon*, p. 177.

do refer to baptism in water, they can only refer to the fact, and not to the mode of that ordinance. This is a mere arbitrary assertion which sets all reason at defiance. For there cannot be the shadow of a doubt, that the immersion and emersion of water-baptism are referred to in the expressions "buried with Him" and "raised with Him." And, as we have already remarked, there is nothing whatever to correspond with these expressions in a rite administered by pouring on or sprinkling.

Then our author continues as follows ;—

> "Surely, 'Buried with Him,' 'Also raised with Him through faith in the working of God,' 'Quickened together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,' cannot be intended to be the result of water-baptism!"

In reply to which, we are again compelled to affirm, that we have no part or lot with any who believe that such phrases could be so intended. We recognize no sacramental power whatever in the rite of baptism ; and reiterate our belief, that it was ordained, first, to exhibit by an outward sign that which must previously have taken

place at conversion; and, secondly, to afford to the baptized an opportunity for public confession.

The medium through which the resurrection-life is really bestowed is indicated, in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of a mistake, by the words, "Wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, Who raised Him from the dead." [1]

But faith in its simplest form, the faith that merely saves its possessor, is not the result of baptism in the Spirit, but is vouchsafed in that earlier operation whereby He inclines men to repentance and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. Quite different, however, is the faith which Paul mentions among the special gifts of the Spirit; [2] for that is extraordinary: it does not merely save, but can move mountains.

With our author's remark, that the words, "For in [3] One Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks," [4] refer to the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we cordially agree.

[1] Col. ii. 12.
[2] 1 Cor. xii. 9.
[3] The Greek preposition *en* is used here.
[4] 1 Cor. xii. 13.

For, in that passage, there is no mention of either death or burial; and the element in which the immersion was effected is said to have been that of the One Spirit.

It is with deep regret that we find our author adopting the subjoined words without knowledge, taken, probably, either from Dr. Dale or from some writer of similar views.

> "*Baptizo* makes no provision for taking out of that into which a person is baptized, whether Spirit-baptism or water-baptism, though dipping does make such provision; for 'dipping in' implies 'taking out': but unfortunately *bapto*, 'to dip,' is never used of Christian baptism. If we call the immersion of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and the immersion by the Flood, baptism, then these were baptisms to destruction; for the baptized were never taken out.
>
> "Water is a cleansing element, and a partial application is emblematical of purity for the entire person, as in the case of water, oil, and blood, above referred to; so we believe that sprinkling, or pouring on, is the true

mode of Christian baptism, and not immersion."

Now we cannot be sure that we see through the logic of this paragraph, which seems to us somewhat incoherent and inconclusive. That, however, may be due to our own want of perception. But we take the connection and meaning to be as follows ;—

The word *baptizo* does not imply that a person is ever taken out of that in which he is immersed as *bapto* does. We might, therefore, give the name of baptism to the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, or to that of the Antediluvians in the Flood. And, in that case, these events would be instances of baptism to destruction. But, to avoid such fatal results, since water is regarded as a cleansing element, the application of it to the head or face only is allowed to be emblematical of purity for the entire person, just as in Old Testament ceremonies ; and thus the danger of baptism by immersion is avoided. Therefore, we believe that sprinkling, or pouring on, is the true mode of Christian baptism, and not immersion.

If we have mistaken the author's meaning, we would humbly apologize; but, at present, we do not detect any other sequence of thought in the paragraph. And, if this be its sense, surely the argument could not be deemed conclusive, even if its premises were true, which they are not.

For *bapto* and *baptizo* are, as we have already shown, but different forms of the same word and either of them may, with equal propriety be rendered into English by our verb "to dip."

Whether the person or thing immersed is ever to be taken out, or not, is quickly decided by the sense or context; and one would have thought that the frequent use of *baptizo* in the New Testament would have been sufficient to prove that the word may be applied to a momentary immersion followed by emersion. Moreover, its classical usage would furnish many examples of a similiar kind; such, for instance, as that in Plut. Alex. 67, where it expresses the dipping of cups into a wine-bowl for the purpose of filling them.

We have no wish to call the drowning of the Antediluvians, or the overthrow of the Egyptians, a baptism ; for the Scriptures do not teach us to do so. But Paul does tell us that the Israelites who passed through the depths of the Red Sea and under the cloud, and afterwards emerged on the other shore, were baptized ; [1] while Peter implies the same of the eight persons who were carried through the Flood, and safely landed on the renewed earth.[2]

From the two passages which we have just discussed—Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii. 8–12—we cannot but conclude, that it is not so much the cleansing power of water which is to be made prominent in baptism, since that element seems to have been chosen mainly because it was a convenient fluid in which persons could be immersed, and so, in a figure, pass through death and burial with Christ. For all cleansing comes from the shedding of His Blood in death. It is the floods of Death and of Hades, so graphically described in the Psalms, that have washed away

[1] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.
[2] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

the stains of those who were reckoned to have died in Him, that they might also be raised together with Him.

Upon the error of drawing inferences from Old Testament ceremonies wherewith to explain the ordinances of the New, and upon other mischief resulting therefrom, we have already commented.[1]

In the words, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ,"[2] the reference is, of course, to baptism in water. For that rite is a public profession, that the baptized has believed in Christ, and, therefore, has put on the seamless robe over his own filthy rags, and pledged himself, in the strength of the Lord, to be a follower and imitator of Him Who saved him from death. How he came to be so changed, and to be made a child of God, the previous verse tells us: it was by faith in Christ Jesus, to his possession of which he testified in his baptism. But there is no reference here to any of those "powers of the World to Come" which are bestowed through baptism in the Spirit.

[1] See pp. 50 & 51.

[2] Gal. iii. 27.

## XI

## BORN OUT OF WATER AND SPIRIT

In regard to John iii. 5, it is not likely that Nicodemus would have understood the birth "out of water and Spirit," of which the Lord spoke, to be in any way connected with "the ceremonial washings, and physical purifications by sprinkling, under the Mosaic law." For such a notion as being "born" of these rites was unknown; while, to pass by the fact that the Mosaic sprinklings had nothing in them to correspond with the words "out of"—*ek*—"water," a far better interpretation, which would include both water and Spirit, must have at once presented itself to the mind of the Jewish ruler. Moreover, the Lord would scarcely have recommended the ceremonies of a Dispensation which He was just about to close, as a means of obtaining the Kingdom; and, if He had meant that Mosaic

washings must be supplemented by the influence of the Spirit, as our author suggests, He would not have used the curt, and, in that case, very obscure phrase, "Born out of water and Spirit;" but "Except a man be born not only out of water, but also out of Spirit," or some such sentence. It is, however, impossible that He could have meant any such thing; for He did not approve of the plan of putting a patch of new cloth upon an old garment.

But, if we inquire what was going on just then, what was the stirring event of the moment, the matter in every man's mouth, the answer will be, The baptism of John, to whom "Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan," had gone out. Now, it is not probable that Nicodemus would have come to the Lord without having first procured all possible information respecting Him. And would not one prominent feature in that information have been the testimony of John, that Jesus had presented Himself for baptism, and that, as He was going up from the water, the Spirit of God appeared descending in the form of a dove, and abode upon Him?

With this great event fresh in his mind, would not Nicodemus have instinctively connected the birth "out of water and Spirit" with our Lord's baptism and the descent of the Spirit upon Him immediately afterwards? Surely he could not have failed to do so.[1]

It is true that there is no direct reference to Christian baptism in this passage. But the Lord Himself points out that it occurred in the transitional period between the two Dispensations, which extended from the appearance of John[2] to the day of Pentecostal Power.

[1] For a full exposition of John iii. 5, see *The Church, the Churches, and the Mysteries*, pp. 130–6. It may, however, be useful to transcribe the following note from p. 132;—"Many confuse this passage by explaining that 'water' is used figuratively for the Word of God, by taking heed to which we can cleanse our ways. We would ask such persons how they propose to interpret the second word 'Spirit.' If they give it a literal sense, and understand it to mean the Spirit of God, then they must take 'water,' also, in a literal sense. For, when two words of the same clause are joined by a copulative and governed by the same preposition—which is the case here with 'water' and 'Spirit'—it is impossible to take one of them in a literal and the other in a figurative signification."

[2] Luke xvi. 16.

Even at first sight, then, it does not seem inprobable that the new ordinance would have something to do with Christianity, especially if we notice, that, although the baptism was with a view to the remission of sins after repentance, there is, nevertheless, no mention of Mosaic sacrifices or Aaronic priests ; for the Law and the Prophets ceased when John appeared.[1]

And our first impression is confirmed when we remember Peter's cry to the conscience-stricken Jews ;—

> "Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you, resting upon the Name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." [2]

Here, then, in the very first preaching of the Gospel, we find precisely the same order as in John's baptism—repentance, baptism in water, baptism in Spirit.

But it may be objected, that, except in the solitary case of the Lord, no gift of the Spirit was bestowed after John's baptism. Certainly there

[1] Luke xvi. 16.

[2] Acts ii. 38.

was no such mighty outpouring as that which followed the baptisms recorded in the Acts; nevertheless, there was a minor gift that in some degree corresponded with it.

For, otherwise, how are we to understand the statement of Luke,[1] that the common people and the publicans justified God, because they had been baptized by John; whereas the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, since they had not been baptized by him? Does not this fact manifestly imply, that all who had been baptized of John had received some spiritual grace whereby they were enabled to believe the words of the Lord; while those who had been disobedient in the matter of the forerunner's baptism had no such power, but were incapable of faith in Him Who was greater than John?

[1] Luke vii. 29, 30.

## XII

## THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM

HAVING thus finished what he has to say in favour of pouring on or sprinkling, instead of that complete immersion which the Lord has commanded, our author next proceeds to argue, that infant-baptism is "not only allowable and proper, but also Scriptural." At the outset, we are moved to ask, Could an ordinance said to have been instituted by the Lord be "allowable and proper," unless it were also Scriptural? Is our author a believer in so-called "Apostolical" or "Church-tradition"?

Now, after so bold an avowal of his faith, we naturally look for a clear and unanswerable exposition of its truth. Here, however, we are grievously disappointed. No definite Scripture whatever is quoted: not a single Scriptural

instance of infant-baptism is adduced. All our author's "proofs" seem to us to be obtained by ignoring Dispensational differences, by distortions of texts, by fallacious inferences, and by presenting vague and incorrect views of baptism itself. But we will examine his arguments in detail.

I "The babes of Israel were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, even though they were unconscious of the fact."

Undoubtedly they were; but then, they did not belong to our Dispensation, nor were they subject to its laws. Hence, what was done in their case can by no means furnish a precedent for the baptism of infants in our age.

Moreover, at the first glance, the circumstances are seen to be altogether diverse. On account of Abraham's faith, which was imputed to him for righteousness, the promises were given to his seed as well as to himself. Therefore, as soon as an Israelitish child was born, he was reckoned as one of the Covenant-people; and, as a full member of their community, had a right to all its privileges.

But the rules of the Covenant of Grace are quite different. We are not saved because of Abraham's faith, but each one of us by grace, and through his own individual faith. And, until this faith has been produced in us, we are unsaved, and outside the fold of Christ. For, according to the laws of our Dispensation, no responsible person can be saved in any other way than through faith in Him.

Infants, however, are unable to receive instruction, and, therefore, cannot believe and have faith. Do they, then, if they die in infancy, perish for ever ?

Certainly not ; for they are without responsibility : but their way of salvation is one altogether different from ours—one, moreover, with which believers on earth may not, and cannot, interfere. For the Lord, Who extends His protection to all infants in the time of their unconscious ignorance, takes them to His Own arms for ever, if they should die at so tender an age. And the logical reason why He can do this is evident. He died for the original sin of the whole world—this appears to be the sense in

which He died for all men. Hence, should any one expire before he has reached the age in which conscious and wilful sin against God is possible, the Lord is able to claim him as His Own purchased possession.

Thus, the babe who departs this life is not saved by faith as we are; consequently, he has nothing whatever to do with the appointed profession of faith, which is baptism, or with any other ordinance of the visible Church upon earth.

II "The blessings promised to the elect nation were always shared by their children. 'The promise is to you and to your children.'"

Our remarks upon the first argument are a sufficient answer to this one also. In Israel the blessing was, of course, shared by the children, for the simple reason that Israel was an elect *nation*, every individual member of which, unless he had put himself out of the Covenant, was dealt with by God on the basis of Abraham's faith. But there is no such arrangement as that in the Christian community upon earth; for the latter is not an elect nation, but is made up of

persons dispersed among all nations ; nor can any one be a member of it, unless he has personally believed on the Lord Jesus. Infants, then, as being incapable of faith, do not belong to the visible Church here below, and so are not subject to its ordinances ; but that fact does not prevent their Lord from setting His unseen mark upon them as members of His Body and of the glorified Church above.

Again, our author has no right to quote Peter's words, "The promise is to you and to your children," as a proof that children of our age must necessarily have a share in the blessings which their parents have accepted ; for the context shows that the Apostle is speaking merely of opportunities of blessing, not of the actual possession of it. In the previous verse he has said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in reliance upon the Name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of sins ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And he then adds, "For to you is the promise, and to your children," who may also claim it as soon as they are capable of repentance and baptism ;

and so, too, may the Gentiles, whom we have hitherto regarded as "afar off."

III "The Jews needed no special command to bring their children to Christ by baptism; but, if the children were to be excluded, a special prohibition was requisite."

God had given the Jews reason and common sense, and He expected them to use these gifts in regard to the Gospel which was offered to them. They had been taught to circumcise their infants, on the ground that the latter were descendants of Abraham. But now a new body was being formed, with a view to heavenly, and no longer to earthly hopes; and the first and indispensable condition of membership in it was an absolute faith in the Lord Jesus, and the profession of that faith by a public baptism. Foolish, then, indeed, must that Jew have been who did not understand that infants were necessarily excluded by such a condition. Moreover, he would, also, have had before his eyes the practice of the Apostles, who never baptized any save those that professed to believe in the Lord Jesus with all their heart.

IV Our author now strives to build up an argument by likening the conduct of the disciples, who wished to prevent children from coming to the Lord, to that of those who refuse baptism to infants.

This comparison is manifestly illogical and irrelevant. For those who brought their children to the Lord had no idea of getting them baptized: they simply desired that He should give them His blessing, which was all that He did. Indeed, He had not at that time instituted His Own baptism; nor did He do so until after His resurrection.

It is needless to say, that those who love the Lord, and obey His commands by refusing baptism to any that either cannot or do not believe on Him, would be far from wishing to divert His blessing from the little ones. Nay, they would earnestly supplicate it both for their own children and for those of others; but would take no part in futile attempts to obtain it by unlawful means.

After quoting the Lord's words, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye

shall not enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens,"[1] our author remarks;—

> V "Please note carefully, that little children are eligible for the Kingdom of Heaven. If ready for Heaven as little children, why not eligible for Christ's fold upon earth, and for acknowledgment as His lambs by baptism? If ready for heaven, as they are, they are surely eligible for membership with the Church on earth."

It is difficult to repress astonishment at this argument. Error would be sown broadcast by such loose and illogical teachings. For, of course, infants, who are removed as such by the Lord, will not enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens in the unconscious and incapable state in which they have spent their short existence upon earth. Released from the prison of their tiny and undeveloped bodies, their spiritual faculties will immediately expand: they will become capable of knowing what the Lord has done for them; and, with joyful praise welling from their heart

[1] Matt. xviii. 3.

to their lips, will be found fully prepared to join the heavenly choirs.

But, clogged with flesh as they are here below, and on that account incapable of rapid development, they are utterly unable to take part with others in any kind of worship, and do not possess intelligence sufficient even for the most ordinary converse. Yet, though in so unconscious and helpless a condition, they are, nevertheless, in the fold of Christ, in the sense that the Great Shepherd watches over and protects them.

That, however, is not what our author means: he seems to regard the sectarian Churches as being Christ's fold upon earth.

But what can the ministers of such Churches, even if they be filled with truth and zeal, do for infants? How can they possibly supply the spiritual needs and deficiencies of babes, or teach them the things of God? No; of their fellow creatures, it is fond mothers alone who can render help to the little innocents, and that only in the matter of their bodies, by taking care that they are properly fed, and kept clean and warm.

But the Lord is able, also, to deal with them

spiritually ; and He does not keep them incapable and isolated upon earth, and afflict them with pain, without weighty reason. As for ourselves, we cannot, indeed, repress our emotion when we are standing helplessly beside the cradle of a suffering babe. But we little know how effectually the rebellion hidden within its spirit is being subdued and ejected by a chastisement small, indeed, as compared with that which might be necessary, were the process to be delayed until the child had become a man. There is none save our God that can teach in such a case. But He is able : His discipline can never fail.

By such means He may often complete the sanctification of a little one whom He loves, so that He can at once translate the sufferer, and that for ever, from the dark land of pain into the peace and joy of His Own bright Presence. Often, too, a different result may follow : for, probably, not a few among His choicest saints still upon earth would, if His arm were revealed to them, break forth into thanksgiving as they perceived, that the sufferings of infancy and childhood had wrought in them a chastened and subdued

spirit which could humble itself under the mighty hand of God in circumstances that would otherwise have provoked rebellion and apostasy. When the time comes in which we shall know as we are known, then, at least, we shall joyfully confess, that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, the cruelty of God unspeakably kinder than men.

VI "The babe is not an actual transgressor, so is ready for Heaven, and should be presented and dedicated to Christ in baptism."

It would be impossible to prefix the words, "It is written," to this proposition. A babe is not, indeed, reckoned as an actual transgressor; but that fact does not necessarily imply that he is ready for Heaven. There is, doubtless, in the case of infants a process analogous to our sanctification, in addition to their redemption from original sin by the Blood of the Lord. And it is only by such a supposition that we can account for the sufferings of many infants before they expire. The potentialities of sin are within them, and would certainly be developed if they

lived. And even the very tendency to evil must be removed before the infant can be prepared for the Presence of God. Now, none but the Lord Jesus can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. And He is the Sole Pastor and Teacher of unconscious infants, and has not committed them to the care of the under-shepherds upon earth, to whom He has given no means of communicating with, or of affecting, them in spiritual matters. He alone can teach the babe, while He blends suffering with the influence of His Holy Spirit in ways unknown to us; and "who is a teacher like unto Him"?[1]

[1] Would that these things were more familiar to human minds; for how much blasphemy and rebellion would then be averted!

Mrs. Annie Besant, in her *Autobiography*, tells us of a severe attack of whooping-cough which befell her infant daughter, causing great suffering and danger of life for three weeks. During this trouble, no thought seems to have occurred to her of that sin by which all the misery in the world is to be interpreted. She could not say, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" No; the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, prompted her to regard the illness as a gratuitous torture inflicted upon the child by a ruthless God, if there was a God; and this rebellious feeling was fostered, until, at last,

Hence, all talk of receiving infants into Christ's fold upon earth, or of recognizing them as members of the visible Church upon earth, is the merest sentimentalism, and contains not a particle of truth. Nay, we may go still further, and urge that such a sentiment is full of superstition and mischief. For, as history teaches us too well, whenever it is fostered, its deadly offspring is the doctrine, that infants cannot be saved without the interference of the "Church" upon earth, that they absolutely need baptismal regeneration at the hands of her "priests."

it had "transformed" her, as she puts it, "from a Christian into an Atheist."

The writer was once called to visit a woman of a very different disposition. She was a humble-minded believer, who had a baby-child afflicted in a very strange manner. Much the same as other little ones during the greater part of the day, this child passed into a dreadful condition for about an hour, when she became most malignant, and would bite, strike, kick, tear, or do any mischief that was possible. There seemed to be but one explanation of the phenomenon: the child was evidently possessed.

This was suggested to the mother, but the idea at first threw her into despair. She was, however, reminded that the Lord Jesus, when on earth, did not treat the possessed as if they were wicked above all other men,

It is well that parents should, with much prayer, dedicate their infants to the Lord; but they have no right to substitute such a dedication, however pious in intent, for one of His ordinances: they may not change the purpose of what He has commanded, and so make it of none effect. And He has instituted baptism, not as a presentation of the baptized to Himself by others, but as a public profession of faith in His Name, to be made with their own mouth, and for themselves, by converts who have believed on Him. Nor will He hold those guiltless

but was ever compassionate and ready to deliver them, regarding them as those that were "oppressed by the Devil."

"But why," she asked, "does God allow such terrible oppression?"

"There is," she was told, "a dreadful disease within us, the germs of which may be found in the smallest children. That disease is sin; and, while the Lord will free us by His Blood from all its resulting guilt, the disease itself has to be dealt with by the process which we call sanctification. And this process largely consists of various disciplines, suited to the different orders of human spirits, and made effectual by the power and influence of the Holy Spirit of God. Who can tell," the speaker added, "whether the Lord, perceiving that the discipline of possession was the best for this child, did

who administer a mock baptism when there can be no faith.

Our author's few concluding remarks call for no very special refutation. Parents can train their children in the way in which they should go without breaking the Lord's commandment by sprinkling them while in ignorance, and calling the process baptism. They should wait for the dawn of intelligence, and then train the little ones to love the dear Saviour, Who laid down His Own life to save theirs, and to redeem them from all their iniquities. And, as soon as children do love Him intelligently and sincerely, they may claim to be baptized in reliance upon His Name.

It is a strange argument in defence of infant-baptism to say, that "there is no danger of baptizing a babe as a hypocrite." Undoubtedly, it is impossible for the babe to be a hypocrite in

not, therefore, commit her to you, as one of His blood-bought servants, intending that you should bear with her, and so be a fellow-worker with Himself for her sanctification ?"

The poor woman looked up, and a smile broke through her tears as she said, "Oh ! sir, if that is what it means, I can bear it all."

the matter of his baptism, because he is totally unconscious of what is going on: he makes no statement of faith, and expresses no desire, or hope, to walk thenceforth in newness of life.

But, for aught they know, those who baptize such an infant may be baptizing one who will become as great a hypocrite as the world has ever seen, a thief, a murderer, or a fierce persecutor of the Lord Jesus and His people. They may, if they persist in such a practice, be presuming to admit, into what they call the fold of Christ upon earth, many to whom He will presently say, "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work lawlessness."

In such a case, had they been deceived by the false profession of those whom they baptized, the blame would not have rested upon them. For we are told of love, that it believes all things; and we must, therefore, give credence to a man's profession, that he loves and trusts in the Lord Jesus, unless we detect anything inconsistent with such a profession in his conduct.

But, to assume the power of receiving into His Church those who have not professed to believe

on Him, and concerning whom we have not the slightest evidence that He will ever accept them —such an assumption is certainly to claim for ourselves an authority which He has not conceded.

That "immersion does not guarantee conversion" cannot be denied: on the contrary, almost all immersionists insist, that conversion must have already taken place before immersion can be thought of; for, otherwise, the immersion is not baptism. But the vast majority of Pedobaptists regard sprinkling as equivalent to conversion; for they imagine that, if administered under the authority, and according to the laws, of their own Church, it results in baptismal regeneration.

Of course, there are immersionists who have, also, stood in the ranks of the so-called "higher critics"; but it was scarcely worth our author's while to mention that fact, since it could easily be demonstrated, that, for each single immersionist who has proved an enemy of the Bible, one might reckon hundreds of Pedobaptists and advocates of sprinkling who have set themselves above or against that Word of God, which shall,

nevertheless, judge them in the Last Day.[1]

Moreover, as our author has himself admitted, the immersionists to whom he refers are found, for the most part, in the sect of the Baptists. And that is precisely where a very slight knowledge of human nature would make us expect to find some who have been immersed without spiritual conviction, having merely yielded to ancestral tradition.

For, in their youth, men often become strongly attached to the party or sect in which they have been brought up, and conceive prejudices in its favour which are not, in the least degree, akin either to spiritual conviction or to intellectual belief.

Hence, when they come to maturity, and acquire, it may be, considerable power of thinking for themselves, their earlier prejudices may be shaken. Should they, however, have previously professed, taught, and defended, those prejudices, they will not always surrender them; but sometimes prefer their own outward consistency and reputation to truth, and are, therefore, compelled

[1] John xii. 48.

to stifle conscience. Such men are necessarily forsaken by the Holy Spirit, and may be guided by Satan at his will. "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."

Our author closes his paper with two declarations;—

> I That he could not "refuse to admit babes by baptism into the fold of Christ, as His most precious lambs."

This, as we have already shown, is pure sentimentalism, without a vestige of reality behind it. The Lord has neither commanded, nor even permitted, any to be baptized, save those who have first believed; for baptism is the outward profession of belief. Let this be refuted from the New Testament, if it can be.

> II That he could not conscientiously baptize by any other mode than by sprinkling infants and by pouring on adults.

Now, as coming from one who believes the Bible to be the sole revelation of the will of God to men, this is, indeed, a strange decision. For, in connection with water-baptism, there is not a single instance of either sprinkling or pouring on

in the whole range of the New Testament. Moreover, as we have already seen, the only possible meaning of the term "baptism" itself, and the figure of burial which the ordinance involves, demand that it should be administered by immersion.

Why, then, this rebellion against the command of the Lord and the teaching of His Word?

And, yet again, which book of the New Testament was it that supplied our author with his distinction between infant- and adult-baptism, and directed that "sprinkling" should be the mode in the former case and "pouring on" in the latter? We have never lighted upon anything to that effect, nor do we expect to do so; for the New Testament cannot be inconsistent with itself. And it never commands or permits baptism in any case, save in that of one who would publicly profess his own faith in the Lord Jesus—a condition by which infants are excluded from the ordinance. Since, then, there is no Divinely inspired direction to baptize infants, there can be none to distinguish between the baptism of infants and that of adults.

Thus, it is evident, that our author's conclusions are drawn, not from the Word of God, but from his own imagination and prejudices.

We have now met all the arguments adduced by him in favour of infant-baptism. Few, shallow, and utterly inadequate, they are indeed; but, having replied to them, we shall not now enter more deeply into the subject, because we have fully discussed it in a recent volume—*The Church, the Churches, and the Mysteries.*

In that work we have demonstrated, that, from John's baptism, seeing that it was a profession of repentance, infants were necessarily excluded. That the Lord's commission to His Apostles directed them to go to all nations, and when they had made disciples,[1] first to baptize, and then to teach them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded—the "all things" being contrasted with the simple Gospel, by the reception of which they had become disciples. That circumcision and baptism are initiatory and corresponding ordinances; but that the diverse nature of the Dispensations, to

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

which they severally belong, required that infants according to the flesh should be circumcised, while only spiritual infants, after the second birth, or regeneration, could be baptized. That, in the Acts and Epistles, none but believing men and women are said to have been baptized; and that God has carefully guarded the three recorded cases of household-baptism, so that infant-baptism cannot possibly be inferred from them. And, lastly, that there is no mention of infant-baptism in early Christian writers until the second half of the third century, by which time Christianity had become terribly corrupted, and altogether unlike that which was taught by the Lord and His Apostles.

We have also shown, in the same volume, that the passages in Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, usually cited in favour of infant-baptism, do not even allude to such a thing. And, further, that Tertullian and Origen speak only of the baptism of children—*parvuli*—who were supposed to have some understanding of the ordinance. For Irenaeus, in a celebrated passage to which we have just alluded, distinguishes between un-

conscious infants and children—*parvuli*—treating the latter as having acquired some intelligence and sense of responsibility.

But, for these matters, we must refer our readers to the larger work mentioned above.

## XIII

## A PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION.

We cannot bid the reader farewell without a brief notice of the problem which our investigations present to us.

Why is it that men so determinedly alter, if they do not altogether reject, a plain command of the Lord—a command which, as we have fully demonstrated, cannot be misunderstood, except in cases either of ignorance or of unyielding prejudice ?

For we have found that the very word *baptizo* in itself prescribes the mode of baptism ; while its testimony is corroborated by the Scriptural explanation of the ordinance as representing death and burial with Christ.

And it is equally manifest, that the command to evangelize and make disciples of men, but to

baptize them only after they have believed, is a decisive proof that baptism was not appointed for infants; since they are incapable of fulfilling its conditions, and, therefore, can derive no benefit whatever from its administration. For, in this age of grace, there is but one means of salvation in which we are allowed to co-operate, that of faith in the Lord Jesus. And all who from natural causes are unable to be led along that way must, so far as spiritual things are concerned, be left—and may be left with confidence—to the sole care of the great Saviour Himself.

Nevertheless, the vast majority of professed believers insist upon the substitution of sprinkling, or pouring on, for the Divinely appointed immersion, and also upon the baptism of those who are incapable of faith. And for these flagrant breaches of their Lord's command, they seek to excuse themselves by any false argument that promises to still their conscience.

As we have already seen, they will attribute to *baptizo* a meaning in which it is never found.

They will argue from Old Testament rites,

which belong to a Dispensation altogether diverse from that in which we live. And yet, some of these same persons will cry out against Ritualists, if they should attempt to defend their sacerdotalism, their vestments, and their ceremonies, in a similar way.

They will imitate the tactics of rationalizing critics, by striving to prove that the literal sense of Scriptures which make against them involves an impossibility.

To extricate themselves from a dilemma, they will confuse the baptism in water with the baptism in Spirit; the baptism that bids us descend into the depths with that which is poured down upon us from on high; the baptism which represents our passage through death to life in the Lord Jesus with that which, when we are already quickened, gives us life more abundantly; the baptism which simply commemorates, and testifies to, the way in which we have obtained salvation with that which endues us with mighty power, even with the powers of the World to Come.

Nay, they will actually dare to change the very intention of the ordinance, and make out that

it is to be regarded as a form for the dedication of infants to God by their parents, or for the admission of the same infants into one of the many professedly Christian sects upon earth. And yet, neither of these meanings was ever hinted by the Lord, Who appointed the rite to serve as an intelligent, voluntary, and public, profession of faith in Himself by the person to be baptized.

Again ; some will go so far as to affirm, that baptism was instituted only for those who should be brought out of Heathenism, and not for converts whose parents or ancestors were baptized Christians. So that, practically, they believe it to be an ordinance for Pagan, and not for Christian lands.

And yet, they cannot adduce a single Scriptural text in support of their assertion ; while, at the same time, what they say is contrary to the whole spirit, as well as to the letter, of the New Testament. For, in this age, men are not saved because they have had pious parents, or were born in a Christian country, but only if they have personally believed in the Lord Jesus.

Moreover, we may ask, In what part of the

earth is a Christian land to be found ? Certainly England is not one, nor may we even call it a Deistical country. For, in recent times, its people have deliberately resolved to admit into the ranks of their legislators and councillors, not only those who reject the Lord Jesus, but even men who deny the very existence of God Himself. We can, then, no longer claim that England should be regarded as a Christian realm, though we may be thankful that there are many true Christians in it. But, if England cannot maintain such a claim, what other nation could attempt to do so ?

Lastly : the result of these human evasions is seen in the fact, that there are now not a few who would abolish baptism altogether, on the ground that an outward form or ceremony is valueless, nay, is quite out of place, in a spiritual faith. And hence, that the Lord did not intend His commandment to be taken literally, but only in a spiritual sense ; or, otherwise, that He, at least, restricted the form of baptism in water to the earliest days of Christianity, until believers should have had time to comprehend its purely

spiritual nature. Sometimes they add, that there is no record of the baptism of the Apostles themselves; and hence, that it is, at least, uncertain whether they were baptized or not. But a very few words will suffice to dispose of these objections.

As to the incongruity of an outward form in the present age, baptism was instituted by the Lord at the beginning of this age, and was to be continued throughout it. And, whenever He issues a plain command, it is our duty, not to criticize, but to obey, and that promptly; for He is our Absolute Master.

That He did not intend baptism to be observed for a while, and then omitted, is unmistakably clear for the following reasons. He never spoke of such an intention. And when He has once uttered a command, it loses no weight in the lapse of centuries: it continues to be as valid and binding as when He first gave it, until He Himself rescinds it. But, in this case, He has, apparently, added a limitation, at which, however, we have not yet arrived. For, when He commissioned His disciples to baptize their converts from all nations, He gave the promise, "And, lo, I am

with you always"—that is, while you are performing My commission—"even unto the end of the age." To the end of the age, then, this command to baptize in water must be obeyed by all who love the Lord Jesus, and would have boldness in the Day of His Judgment.

And, as we have already remarked, to be baptized is the first act of obedience required of every one to whom He has been revealed as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and who has thankfully accepted His salvation. Thus, it is by testifying to the world, under the figure of immersion, of his burial with Christ, and of his resurrection with Him to newness of life, that the disciple commences the race in which he must agonize until he has reached the goal, and deals the first blow in the war which, in the might of the Spirit, he must ceaselessly wage against his proud and rebel self, until it is brought into such subjection that, like his great Leader, he can rejoice in pleasing, not himself, but his God.

As to the last plea of those who would abolish the Lord's ordinance, it is true that there is no record of the baptism of the Apostles who followed

Him during His earth-life; but where does the Bible profess to tell us of all that has happened? It leaves some things to be inferred, to test our hearts whether they be sincere or hypocritical; but always, as in this case, gives us sufficient reason for the right inference.

During the forty days that intervened between the Lord's resurrection and His ascension, He was frequently seen by His disciples, and spoke with them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Now, He had previously declared, that except a man should be born of water and Spirit, that is, should have undergone the baptisms in water and in Spirit, he could not enter into the Kingdom of God. Is He likely, then, to have forgotten to provide that His disciples should be baptized in water before they received the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost, and should thus themselves become duly qualified for that Kingdom which they were commissioned to preach to others? Let it be remembered, too, that it was He Who commanded them to baptize in water all those who should profess belief in His Name; and it was not from Him that men learnt to preach

without a qualm, that which they do not practise.

Moreover, the baptism of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, who became the greatest of all the Apostles, is specially recorded.

Hence the baptism of the Twelve may be inferred as certainly as if it had been actually narrated in the New Testament.

Amid the babel of objections and evasions, such as those which we have described, and in the uncertainty that, in many quarters, has resulted from them, it is not surprising that we sometimes hear even professed believers affirming, that such and such commands of the Lord are of little importance; that exact and punctilious obedience is not required, provided our hearts are right with Him;[1] that this or that is the truth of the matter, either in the judgment of the speaker or in that of some recognized authorities; and so on. And, of course, the logical conclusion from such excuses for neglect of duty soon follows in practice, though it will not, probably, be expressed in words;—If God's commandments may

[1] How our hearts can be right with God, if we are not troubling ourselves to walk in strict obedience to His commands, these people do not inform us.

be thus lightly changed or altogether neglected, why should I make myself an object of dislike and contempt, by outraging the taste and judgment of nearly all the sensible intellectual and highly religious people around me, and, indeed, of society in general ?

Alas for the folly, the madness, of such reasoning ! Is not the Day of Man all but ended, and will it not speedily give place to the Day of the Lord ? Do we not believe His threat, that, if we are ashamed of Him in this wicked and adulterous generation, He, also, will be ashamed of us in the presence of a very different company, even before His Father and the holy angels ? And shall one jot or one tittle of the law uttered by the Judge of all the earth be neglected without due punishment when He sits upon His awful Throne ?

But, to return to our problem. How can we account for these strange evasions and distortions of, and oppositions to, a very plain and easy command of our Blessed Saviour and Lord ?

There can be but one reply. They are produced by the influence of evil spirits upon our fallen humanity, and that chiefly in four ways.

I These demons of the air aggravate our natural propensity to disobedience and self-will, even in the things of God.

II They play upon the materialism and superstition which is implanted in our hearts.

III They stimulate our impatience of any command of God which entails personal inconvenience, however slight.

IV And they provoke our souls to revolt against that which tends to humble our pride.

I Of the first of these ways we need say but little. "The carnal mind," we are told, "is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be."[1] Now, many believers, who do not follow on to know more of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, retain much of their carnality; so much sometimes that we find Paul saying to the Corinthians, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ."[2] In the case of all such persons, the Power of the Air can with little difficulty stir up a spirit of indifference, and soon of downright

[1] Rom. viii. 7. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 1.

disobedience, to the law of the Lord, whether to that of baptism or to any other test of submission.

II The same evil spirits tempt us on the side of superstition, when they prevail upon us to believe, that the mere form of baptism, apart from the motive that prompts men to submit to it, is a sort of charm, or magical process, by which the baptized is saved.

The writer remembers an incident, in his own experience, which well illustrates the utter failure in the hour of need of such a merely sacramental and superstitious faith.

He had lately moved to a new district, where there was very little knowledge of the love and salvation of God, and had begun to labour among the people. One day a physician called upon him, and asked if he would go to a neighbouring village, and see whether he could do anything for a young lady who was dying of consumption, and was in much trouble about her sins. The doctor stated, that her Vicar having been withher, and failed to relieve her mind, she had appealed to him, and begged him to try to find some one who might, perhaps, be able to tell her what she must do.

"But if you go," he added, "you must go immediately; for she is in the last stage of the disease, and may die at any time."

Of course, a carriage was at once procured, and the writer hastened to the house that had been indicated to him. As he entered the sick's lady's room, she addressed him in a voice of strong emotion, and the following conversation ensued.

"Oh! I am so glad to see you! I want you to write out some prayers for me to use."

"I do not think I can do that; for it would be of no service to you. If you need anything from God, you must ask Him for it in your own words, just as they come straight from your heart. He will not turn away from you, however badly you may express your petition, provided you offer it in the Name of His dear Son. But what is it that you are needing?"

"I must die very soon, I know not how soon; and my sins lie heavily upon me. I have thought little or nothing of God, and have wasted my life."

"But you have had your Vicar with you; did he not tell you how you could obtain the forgiveness of your sins?"

"No: he did not seem to understand my feelings. When I spoke to him of my fears, he said, 'But you have been baptized and confirmed, have you not?' And I answered, 'Yes.' 'And you have not neglected the Communion, and have been pretty regular in your attendance at church: have you not?' 'Yes,' I replied. 'Well, then,' he said, 'you need not trouble yourself: you are all right.' But I could not feel this, and know that my sins are not forgiven. What can I do?"

Of course, the good news of salvation through faith in the Blood of the Lord Jesus was at once set before her: one or two plain and striking texts were quoted, and the subject was illustrated by the history of the Serpent of Brass.

As the speaker proceeded, her intensely earnest face began to brighten; and, when he had finished, she exclaimed;—"Why, now that you have told me this, I remember several verses which give the same promise. Yes, the Lord does love even me, and He will wash away all my sinful stains with His most precious Blood." And, with a full heart, she gave thanks to God for His unspeakable Gift.

What followed does not bear immediately upon our subject, but is, perhaps, worthy of mention. As the visitor was at the door, the dying lady said;—"The gracious Lord has taken all my fears away, except, perhaps, a little dread, that I cannot help feeling, of the act of dying."

"But," was the reply, "if He loves you so much that He has taken away the great burden of your sins, would He not be just as willing to relieve your mind of this lesser fear, should you ask Him to do so? To His people death is like a tunnel, which may be very dark as you enter it; yet you can see, at the other end, the light towards which you are moving. Cast, then, the burden of this dread, also, upon the Lord; and when you are called to pass through the darkness of death, He will cause you to see the glory beyond it; so that you will take courage, and give thanks. Nay, without waiting for the hour of death, He will at once take away all your terror, if you entreat Him to do so. He has given His life-blood for you; and, in comparison with that, how small is any other gift which He could bestow!"

When she was visited on the following day, she had been made to triumph over all her fears, and was rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. A few hours afterwards she died. She had been for a while more free from pain; when, suddenly, weak as she was, she raised herself in the bed, stretched out both her hands toward a corner of the room, uttered an exclamation of joy, and fell back dead. It seemed evident that the Lord had abundantly answered her prayer, and had flooded the dark valley with the light of His glory. For it is a living faith in, and a direct appeal to, Himself that avails: a blind trust in forms and so-called sacraments may be "a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." [1]

To return, however, to our argument—the error that the mere form of baptism saves, when once established, naturally led to another. For, if we concede that the bare rite accomplishes salvation, the simplest logic demands that we should not deprive infants of so great a privilege.

From this point, again, a third error was de-

[1] Prov. xiv.12.

veloped. For, if baptism saves an infant, it naturally follows that the infant who dies unbaptized must be lost—a doctrine of lies much taught in the Catholic Churches, but altogether opposed to the spirit of New Testament Christianity, and having no place in its letter.

And, upon this untruth, yet a fourth error is built, which we will leave Mr. Michael McCarthy to expound;—

> "The way in which the priest interferes in connexion with the solemn act of childbirth well reveals his incapacity to understand the condition of things at that vital moment of human existence. For him that great natural event in the lives of two human beings is but a question of religious 'shop'; just as everything else with which he is concerned. If there is one more outstanding fact than another in connexion with midwifery affairs in Catholic Ireland, it is that vast numbers of our better-class Catholic women are positively afraid to be attended by a Catholic doctor; and one result is, that few, if any, Catholic doctors have attained to a

position of lucrative eminence in the midwifery branch of the profession. . . . It is a well-known fact that the priest lays it down for the Catholic midwifery doctor, that, whenever it is a question of saving the life of either the parturient mother or of the unborn child, then it is the mother's life which must be sacrificed, on the pretext that the child may be born alive and saved from hell by baptism!

They base their *locus standi* on their professed zeal for the administration of the rite of baptism. It reminds one of the conduct of the Spanish Friars in South America, who used to baptize the Indian infants, and then hurl them into the air to fall upon the upturned points of the bayonets of the Spanish soldiers.

One of the Catholic midwifery doctors, who, despite priestly advertisement, did not succeed in making money by his profession, was said to have invented a mechanical appliance for baptizing the infant in its mother's womb, and thereby enabling him

to reconcile it to his conscience to save the mother's life, if it were found impossible that the child should be born alive.

* * * * *

I have endeavoured to trace up the origin of the priest's carelessness of the mother's life, and I believe it is a legacy from the vicious habits of the priesthood in Italy, and other Continental countries, and that it is connected with the well known saying, "Every priest christens his own child first." I believe that the mothers of the illegitimate children of the priests in those countries were freely sacrificed at child-birth; and that a kind of law and lying logic on the subject were manufactured by the Continental priests, and were borrowed at second-hand by our Irish priests, the lower class of whom adopted them, these Continental priests being the worst exemplars our Irish priests could follow."[1]

We may appropriately close this subject by a

[1] *Priests and People in Ireland*, pp. 410–12.

quotation from W. R. Greg's *Enigmas of Life*,[1] which will show to what fate the priests of Rome doom the infant that dies without baptism.

> "I have now lying before me a book entitled *A Sight of Hell*, professing to come from the Rev. Father Furniss, C.S.S.R., printed '*permissu superiorum*,' and recommended to be used, along with the Catechism, in Sunday-schools as part of a course of religious instruction. It is one of a series of 'Books for Children and Young Persons.'"

Mr. Greg then cites three frightful passages, which vividly portray, (1) what will happen to any child who goes to Hell, (2) the everlasting torture of a girl of eighteen in a "dress of fire," and (3) "the sight of a boiling boy." Then comes a description of an unbaptized baby in a red-hot oven;—

> "Hear how it screams to come out! See how it turns and twists itself about in the fire! It beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the

[1] Pp. 251–3, note.

floor of the oven. You can see on the face of this little child what you see on the faces of all in hell—despair, desperate and horrible."

We may, probably, regard this scene as a climax of the superstition which owes its origin to the practice of infant-baptism.

III. In the abstract, it may seem passing strange, that believers should allow the personal inconvenience of immersion to keep them from fulfilling the command of the Most High God. But, undoubtedly, this cause is sufficient to hinder the obedience of some: nor, alas! are excuses of extreme triviality restricted to those who shrink from immersion. They rise to the lips of many a professed believer whenever he is moved, either by his own conscience or by the pleading of others, to do, or to suffer, for the Lord's sake, something which is not to his taste. How perfect an insight into fallen human nature do we find in that episode of Solomon's Song, when the Beloved knocks at the door of the house in which she whom He seeks is reposing, and says;—

"Open to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My undefiled;
For My head is filled with dew;
My locks with the drops of the night."

And the selfish, the petty-spirited, answer is;—

"I have put off my dress: how shall I put it on again?
I have washed my feet: how shall I defile them again?" [1]

But sometimes there are real and great inconveniences to be faced by those who would obey their Lord. They may incur the anger and contempt of all that are dearest to them: loss of position may result; or, in Mohammedan and Pagan countries, or among Jews, bitter persecution, and even death. But none of these things must move them; for He has said;—

> "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." [2]

[1] Song of Sol. v. 2, 3. [2] Matt. x. 37–9.

This, however, is by no means the rule upon which most Christians act: they seem to have altogether forgotten the solemn declarations of their Master. But with what unspeakable horror will they recall those words when they see, upon His Judgment-seat, Him Who was pierced for them!

In these days, it seems to be a frequent practice among missionaries to allow converts to remain unbaptized, in order that they may avoid the disownings, persecutions, maltreatments, or even slow poisonings or assassinations, which are sure to follow baptisms. God forbid that we should judge those who shrink from terrors so fearful. We sympathize deeply with the brothers or sisters that are confronted with such trials: we weep with the missionary who feels that he must advise, nay urge, the possibly fatal step. But, if the Lord is to be obeyed, there is no alternative.

> "Forasmuch, then, as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves, also, with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, that he no

longer should live the rest of his life-in-the-flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

"Wherefore, let them, also, that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator." [1]

IV. Of much wider influence, in restraining believers from a public confession of the Lord Jesus by immersion, is that spirit of pride by which Satan fell, and of which some subtle but disastrous action might be traced in every one of us.

This feeling, natural to all human souls, is stimulated in many ways, and, not least, in the following. The fact, that the great Catholic Churches of the West, together with nearly all of the communities formed by secession from them, have adopted infant-baptism and sprinkling, makes the number of those who obey the Lord, according to His Own directions, very small; while their rank and position are, for the most part, insignificant. And such a condition

[1] 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2, 19.

of things ought, of course, to be expected by those whose Bible has forewarned them, that, during the present age, only a few will find the narrow way; and whose special Apostle has frankly declared, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." But even believers too often like to go with the many, and especially with the respectable many, with the wise, and the mighty, and the noble, of this world. And so they break, not only the law of baptism, but also that other imperative command, associated with so glorious a promise;—

> "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty." [1]

Again, there are many who regard public immersion as a humiliation in itself, as an act far beneath their personal dignity. "I would never think of demeaning myself in such a way

[1] 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

as that," said a lady, supposed to be an advanced believer, as she stood near a baptistery. And, in a very different spirit, another lady, who, at the time of her conversion fifteen years before, had refused to obey the Lord, but had now repented and determined to do so, remarked ;— "It is a very humiliating act, is it not ? But then, I suppose, that is just what it is intended to be."

To such as are of a proud heart undoubtedly it is ; for they can never enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens, unless they have, first, become poor in spirit. There is no other road by which we can follow the Captain of our salvation into the Glory, save that which runs through the whole length of the Valley of Humiliation. "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased : but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," are His Own words, and we may be sure that He will make them good on That Day.

## XIV

## A FINAL WORD

But, spite of all that has been urged, many will still be saying, Is not this a great commotion over a matter of very slight importance?

We have already given several answers to this question, but will offer one more from Old Testament analogy. Nearly every Biblical student would concede, that circumcision and baptism are corresponding rites, seeing that both of them are initiatory, and admit those who undergo them into the Covenants of their respective Dispensations. Now, in the fourth chapter of Exodus, we find the following significant narrative;—

> "And it came to pass, at the resting-place over night, that the Lord met him (Moses), and sought to kill him.
>
> "Then Zipporah took a flint, and cut off

the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said, 'Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me!'[1]

"So He let him go. Then she said, 'A bridegroom of blood art thou,' because of the circumcision."

Now, the general meaning of this mysterious incident may be readily understood. Moses had received his commission, and, accompanied by his wife and two children, was on his way to Egypt, to restore the faith of his people in Jehovah, and to lead them out of the House of Bondage with a glorious deliverance. But, lo, while he was hastening to his solemn work, he was bringing with him signs of disobedience in his own family. One, probably the younger, of his sons, that is, Eliezer, had not been circumcised; and the reason of this neglect is indicated in the narrative with sufficient clearness. The persistent objection of his Midianitish wife, who appears to have had a strong repugnance to the rite, had overpowered him. He had yielded, and consented to a deliberate act of rebellion

[1] Exod. iv. 24–26.

against Jehovah, Who, up to that time, had seemed to have overlooked the transgression.

But he could not be allowed to enter upon his mission in what must have been conscious disobedience. And so, when he and his family had halted at a lodging-place for the night, the Lord suddenly revealed Himself, and made as though He would slay him. We do not, of course, know the exact meaning of this mysterious part of the narrative, in what way the Presence of the Lord was indicated, and what precise effect it had upon Moses. Probably, however, the latter was smitten to the ground, and lay there very manifestly expiring. But the reason of the appalling visitation flashed like lightning into the conscience-stricken mind of Zipporah. For Moses, when urging her to consent to her son's circumcision, had, doubtless, repeated the words of Jehovah to Abraham;—

> "And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken My covenant." [1]

[1] Gen. xvii. 14.

At the time she had thought lightly of the threats of God, and would not be moved by them from the purpose of her own will. But now, unexpectedly, those threats were in process of fulfilment: the grasp of God was upon the disobedient father, and who could tell whether it would not quickly seize, also, upon the innocent son. Her husband lay helpless, with the pallor of death upon his face: there was none to aid her, and not a moment to lose. She snatched a sharp flint [1] from the ground, and was herself compelled to perform the rite which she had so stubbornly resisted. But her spirit was unsubdued, and, as soon as she had circumcised her son, she threw the foreskin passionately at the feet of her husband, and exclaimed, "A bridegroom of blood art thou to me!" That is,

[1] For that is all that the Hebrew word means. Some would have us render "a knife of stone," or a "stone knife"; because such implements are said to have been used in the circumcision described by Joshua. But Joshua speaks distinctly of "swords" or "knives of stones": here we have mention only of a stone or flint—a rude instrument, the compulsory use of which emphasizes the terror and desperation to which Zipporah's sin had reduced her.

probably, I have called thee back to life, so that thou art, as it were, a new bridegroom to me, but only through the spilling of my son's blood.

For, at that moment, the Lord stayed His hand, and graciously suffered Moses to revive. But Zipporah was by no means pacified at the sight of his recovery. She repeated her indignant words, and continued to show herself so unsubmissive and surly that Moses, perceiving her unfitness to be his companion in his service for Jehovah, sent her and his children back to her father, with whom they abode, until Jethro brought them to the camp of Israel in the wilderness.

Very severely, then, did God punish the neglect of circumcision. And if He dealt so terribly with those who knew comparatively little of Him, will He be more lenient to such as are disobedient in the corresponding rite of baptism, to whom all the depths of His love, in delivering up His Only Begotten Son to death for our sakes, are revealed ?

With one more illustration from the Old

Testament, and the lesson to be learnt from it, we will conclude.

Israel had passed through the Jordan, and the people were, at last, face to face with their foes, with the men in whose presence their spies had felt themselves to be but as grasshoppers, and whose land was studded with great cities walled up to heaven. The time of trial had come: would Jehovah still lead them on, and destroy these mighty nations, also, before them, as He had destroyed the Egyptians and the Amalekites? An Israelite, glancing back at the rushing flood through which a path had been so wondrously made for the passage of his people, would, probably, have answered with exultation;—Yes, unquestionably He will! What doubt can there be that He, Who smote asunder the mighty waters that were impeding our march, will now complete His work, and lead us on to victory? But, had the host moved forward at once to war, that Israelite would have been painfully disappointed: his eyes might have beheld the rout and slaughter of his people.

For Jehovah had looked down upon the camp

of Israel, and had seen in it a sin, which, unless it could be removed, would compel Him to withdraw His guidance and aid. For, if rebellion were found in the midst of the Israelites themselves, how could He commission them to destroy the rebels of Canaan; and how could He give the Promised Land to those who had broken His Covenant, and were thus virtually cut off from their people?

For, although the Israelites who had come out of the Land of Bondage had been circumcised, they had not circumcised the children that were born to them in the wilderness, "on the road as they came out of Egypt." And hence, since there had been so great a mortality among the elder males during the forty years of wandering, a very large proportion of the people had not undergone the rite which alone could admit them into the Covenant of God.

And so, before they could be allowed to move from their first camping-ground on the west of the Jordan, Joshua was commanded to see to the circumcision of those who had not yet received the sign of the Covenant. The people

were obedient; and, as soon as the Lord's command had been fulfilled, and His neglected Passover eaten, He said to Joshua;—"This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." The reference was to the malicious taunts of the Egyptians, who had kept saying, that Jehovah had brought the Israelites out of Egypt in order to destroy them in the wilderness—an assertion which might have seemed likely to prove true when the people were ordered to get them back into the wilderness, and to wander there for yet eight and thirty years. But now such taunts must for ever cease: Israel had been brought safely and finally out of the wilderness, the Covenant with their God had been established, and they would soon begin to possess the Promised Land.

These gracious words were quickly followed by a still more gracious token of the Lord's favour. The camp at Gilgal was but half an hour's march from Jericho; and it was, probably, in the evening of the same day that Joshua, while reconnoitring the strong city, suddenly beheld a glorious Form, holding a drawn sword in His

hand. This was no angel: it was the Son of God Himself, come down to be the Leader of those who now, in their obedience, could be recognized as "the host of the Lord"; and Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and worshipped Him. The capture of Jericho was ensured.

Here, then, as also in the case of Moses, the neglect of the sign of the Covenant was noticed by the Lord just as He was about to fulfil His promises. And His saving Arm refused to act until obedience had been rendered; indeed, had rebellion continued, It would speedily have become an Arm, no longer of deliverance, but of death.

Now, to us it seems that believers in the Lord Jesus are, at this very moment, approaching a crisis similar, in many respects, to that which Israel had to face after the passage of the Jordan. For, on all sides, evidence is accumulating, that the time for the great predicted change is drawing near; that the wilderness-life of the true Church is all but ended; and that her members will soon be summoned by the Captain of the Lord's host to join Him in the heavenly Canaan.

For what now remains to be done before we may expect to hear His voice? So far as the Divine predictions are concerned, nothing, absolutely nothing!

The wondrous prophecies that foreshadow the history of the centuries are all fulfilled, save such parts of them as refer to the final catastrophe.

The Jews are fast becoming once more a nation, and are beginning to organize themselves; while many of them are actually gathering in their own land, and many more are contemplating a return thither. Already there are far more of them in Palestine than either Ezra or Nehemiah restored to the land of their fathers; far more than have ever previously dwelt there since the days when their nation was finally dispersed by Hadrian.

The time for the resumption of God's dealings with them, and the unfolding of the long-dreaded Seventieth Seven of Years, must be close at hand. And, before that stormy period can set in, the official testimony of the Church upon earth must have ended, and the saints that are found

ready have been rapt, far above the anguish and wailing of the plague-stricken earth, into the presence of their King.

Then, again, if we turn to the nations, democracy, foretold in Scripture as the characteristic political feature of the world in its closing days, is almost everywhere predominant: Jesuitism, socialism, and anarchism, are undermining the governments of divers countries; unrest, confusion, and distress, are seen in many quarters; the greed of peoples and races is increasing, just as that of individuals; there is among the great nations a shuddering dread of war, for which, nevertheless, all are preparing; principles of federation and alliance for mutual defence are being inculcated and pondered, and, among the Latin nations especially, are being driven home by terror at the mighty and simultaneous increase of the British, the American, and the Russian Empires—a fact which may before very long result in the Confederacy of the Ten Kings.

Yet again, lawlessness and want of natural affection are becoming common: men are listening more and more, and that avowedly, to the teach-

ings of seducing spirits and demons; while here and there false Christs and false prophets are, from time to time, arising.

And, consequently, not only is the Name of our dear Lord and Saviour set on one side, and either scorned or forgotten, but even that of His Father, the Glorious Almighty and Everlasting God, is no longer regarded! For, steeped in, and drugged with, their boasted wisdom and their evolutionary lore, men now feel the need of a Creator no more than they do that of a Saviour from sin and death.

The last rebellion against God is in progress, and, after a short-lived triumph of the Harlot-Church, the Beast will appear, to oppose and exalt himself, not only against God, but against every existing object of worship.

Such, then, being the present condition and dark future of the world, what is there to which we who believe can lift up our hearts and hope? One thing only. The Lord, Who bought us with His Own Blood, has promised to reveal Himself suddenly to such as are looking for Him: they will find that He has expiated all their sins, and

He will in an instant take them away from the miserable earth, and from all the things that are coming upon it, and receive them into His Own Presence, into the everlasting salvation which He has prepared for them.

So far as we can tell, by comparing the things that are going on around us with His Word, He is just about to fulfil this promise—we know not how quickly. Will He find us in such a condition that He will be able to deem us worthy of His marvellous deliverance? It is only to those who are showing whole-hearted devotion to Him in their lives; it is only to those upon whom the Spirit of grace and supplication is poured, so that they can watch and pray always—it is only to such that this transcendent privilege will be accorded. But we cannot now review the whole subject. Let every believer examine himself in regard to it; for the time is at hand: and let him take care to judge himself severely, that he may not be judged by the Lord.

We will, however, for the present, keep strictly to the one point to which we have been directing attention in this little book.

Were the Lord's summons, "Come up hither!" to be heard now, as it might be at any moment, would He find that we had been obedient to that commandment which should have been our first care after conversion? Would He know, that we had believed, and had been forthwith baptized, in the manner, and with the meaning, which His Word indicates? But, if we should be found to have been disobedient in this particular, what, without taking other sins into account, do we think would be the consequence?

The man who had not been circumcised was cut off from his people, because he had broken the Covenant. He might have done many other things supposed to be pleasing to God; but he had neglected the rite which would have given him entrance into the Covenant that saved. For, in the things of God, entrance may be made only by the door which He has opened: they that climb over the wall are doomed to punishment as thieves and robbers.

Are, then, God's commands for this Dispensation less imperative than those which were given

through Abraham and Moses? It certainly does not appear so.

> "For, if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? which, having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His Own Will." [1]
>
> "See that ye refuse not Him That speaketh. For, if they escaped not when they refused him that warned them on earth, much more shall not we escape who turn away from Him That warneth from heaven." [2]

No; the commands of God are far more imperative in this age of ours than in that which preceded it, and far less excuse will be allowed to those who fail to keep them. For not only has He now spoken to us through His Son, but,

[1] Heb. ii. 2–4. [2] Heb. xii. 25.

if we be disobedient in these times, we must be so with the full knowledge that, when nothing else could save us, He gave up the Same Only Begotten Son for our sakes.

If, then, we have not already done so, let us at once obey Him, Who loves us and loosed us from our sins by His Blood, in the matter of baptism. For, so far as we can judge from His Word, it will not be long before those who are ready will be called away from the scenes of earth to stand with Him on the heavenly Mount Zion. And how can we be ready, if we have neglected His wishes, and have not entered into His Covenant of Grace by the door which He has made, and to which He has plainly directed us ?

Already He has sent us a message, as clear as that with which He warned Israel to obey the law of circumcision, that they might be deemed fit to take possession of the land. For He has caused many of His servants, and that simultaneously, to discover that He is near, even at the door, and that His people must earnestly follow after holiness, if they would be found of Him in

peace. And He has further enabled not a few to discern, that the sole way of holiness lies through obedience, and that the first step in obedience is baptism, by immersion, after belief. For by it a testimony is borne to the world, that the baptized has died with Him unto sin, and has risen, in the power of His life, to do the will of His Father, and to wait patiently for His coming.

During the last few years, many believers have acknowledged this command, and joyfully obeyed it. And, for the most part, they have taken this step, not as a matter of sect, but simply of doing the Lord's will, and so have remained in whatever communities they happened to be —provided that Christ was preached in them— rejoicing in Him, and looking for His appearing.

For whether it be baptism, or any other of His commands, that is brought before us, the same rule always applies: the most implicit, exact, and cheerful obedience is our only ground of hope, if we would meet Him with joy, and not shrink with shame from before Him at His coming.

# INDEX


## A.

Abraham, Israelites dealt with by God on the basis of the faith of, 123

Acts ii. 39, exposition of, 124–5

Apostles, the Twelve, were they baptized ? 149–51

## B.

Baptism by sprinkling, unknown in early Church, except in two cases, 28–32 ; reason of the change to, in the Western Church, 36–7 ; manner and date of change to, in the Latin Church, 37–40 ; Kurtz's explanation of the same, 39 ; Luther's plea against it, 39–40 ; change to, in the English Church, 40–1 ; causes of the same according to Dr. Wall, 41–3 ; change to, not authorized by the rubric in the English Prayer-Book, 43 and note ; summary of history of, 43–4

Baptism in the Spirit, why said " to be poured out upon " any one, 24, 53 ; comes after baptism in water, 62 ; reason of the single exception to this rule, 62–3 ; described as baptism in, and not of, the Spirit, 66 ; is an immersion in Spirit, 66–7 ; the same preposition used of immersion in an evil spirit, 67 ; nature of baptism in the Spirit, 82 ; promise of in Acts i. 5, fulfilled in Acts ii. 2–4, 81, 83 ; has nothing to do with death and burial, but endues the already quickened with power, 102–3

Baptism in water, cleanses from sin only in type, 63–4, 108–9 ; subject of, may be either clothed or divested, 75 ; cannot be dispensed with even in case of previous baptism in Spirit, 81 ; use of with infants in the previous Dispensation no precedent for this age, 121–2 ; the indispensable condition of faith—not required for

circumcision — excludes infants from, 125; children not brought to the Lord for, 126; why do men either alter or ignore the Lord's command respecting? 143; summary of evasions of, 144–51; confusion of, with baptism in the Spirit, 145; intention of mis-stated, 145–6; attempts to dispense with, 147–8; alleged incongruity of, in a spiritual faith, 148; is to be continued until the end of the age, 148–9; is the first act of obedience required of converts, 149; effect of disobedience in regard to, 151–2; causes of repugnance to, 152–68; is a signal for persecution, 164; consequent neglect of, by missionaries, 165–6; pride a great hindrance to, 166–8

Baptism of Israelites in the Red Sea, furnishes no precedent for infant-baptism in this age, 59, 60

Baptism of John, involves no real difficulties, 67–71; was followed by a gift of the Spirit, 118–9

Baptism of the Lord by John, remarks on an engraving of, 76; on ancient pictures of, 76–7 and note

Baptism of the Three Thousand, the, a water- and not a Spirit-baptism, 80–3; mistaken objection to, grounded on a supposed deficiency of water in Jerusalem, 83–9

Baptisms, the two, are connected with distinct actions of the Spirit, 101–5

*Baptizo*, a lengthened form of *bapto*, 13; why it was not translated in A.V., 17–8; meanings of, in Liddell and Scott's Lexicon, 19, 20; in Schleusner's Lexicon, 20–1; other meanings of, 20 note; meaning of, decides that baptism is immersion, 22–4; attempts of scholars to change meaning of, 24–5; meaning of, in early Christian writers, 28–33; in Chrysostom, 32; in Ambrose, 32–3; according to Bingham and Wall, 33; signifies "to dip," like *bapto*, 112; the context of, decides whether the person immersed is taken out, 112

*Bapto*, meaning of, 13; perf. part. pass. of, wrongly rendered in R.V., 13–6; meanings of, 14 note

C

Ceremonies of O.T., afford no precedent for Christian rites, 57; falsely cited in support of Ritualistic practices, 51

Christian country or nation, not to be found in the world, 146–7
*Church, the Churches and the Mysteries, The*, summary of facts connected with baptism in, 140–2
Church, the true, its sojourn on earth nearly ended, 177
Circumcision, corresponds to baptism, 47–50; resurrection implied in, as in baptism, 49–50; regarded as corresponding to baptism by Paul, 50; contrast between and baptism, in John vii. 23, 50; severity of God in case of its neglect, as exemplified in Moses, 169–73; neglect of, by Israel in the wilderness, 173; blessings consequent on reception of, by Israel, 176–7
Cisterns, domestic, in Jerusalem, 87–9; two or three found in each house, 87; used for baths and ceremonial washings, 88–9
Clinical baptism, 30–1; Cyprian's decision in regard to, 31
Col. ii. 8–12, refers to baptism in water, 105–7; makes faith, and not sacramental efficacy, the medium through which the resurrection-life is bestowed (*v.* 12), 108–9
Coming of the Lord, its nearness, 181; how shall we meet Him, if we be found disobedient, 182
Consecration, the, of Aaronic priests, does not correspond with baptism, 46–7; nevertheless, the priests were immersed in water, 47
Cor. (1.) x. 1, 2, exposition of, 57–8; Israelitish fathers said to have been immersed in the sea and beneath the cloud, 57–8, 113

D

Dale, Dr. J. W., his work on baptism, 8; his untenable explanation of *baptizo*, 8, 9
Desert, meaning of the term in the N.T., 91
*Didache, The*, its directions for baptism, 29, 30
Divestment, the, of Catechumens before baptism, 34; unsatisfactory explanations of, 34–5; to enter the water in a state of nudity not essential to baptism, 75
Drowned in wine, to be, illustration of figure from Shakespeare, 19, 20 note

E

*Eis*, the Greek preposition, meanings of, 93; renderings of, in English Versions, 93–5
*Ek*, the Greek preposition, meanings of, 96; renderings of, in English Versions, 96–8

*Ekcheo epi*, in Joel ii. 28, and Acts ii. 17, 23–4
*En*, the Greek preposition, causes of various renderings of, in the English Versions, 77–9
*Enigmas of Life*, extract from, 162–3
Eunuch, the, an Ethiopian proselyte, 90; might have found water sufficient for immersion on the routes from Jerusalem to Gaza, 90–3; need not have looked for water at all, had sprinkling or pouring on been contemplated, 98
Excuses, for neglect of baptism, on the ground of personal inconvenience, 163–4
Ezek. xxxvi. 25, a Millennial promise to Israel, 53–4

F

Faith, different degrees of, represented in water-baptism and bestowed in Spirit-baptism, 109
Fountain of the Virgin, bathing in, of both sexes fully clothed, 84–5

G

Gal. iii. 27, refers to baptism in water, 114
Gaza, two main routes to, from Jerusalem, 91–2

I

Immersion, defended by all sound scholars, 7; views of early Christians on, 29–32; of Bingham and Wall, 33; of the Eastern and Russian Churches, 33; of Dean Stanley, 33–4
Infant-baptism, forbidden in Scripture, 4; close connection of, with Baptismal Regeneration, 4; defended by many scholars, 9
Infants, salvation of, 11, 122–3; brought into the Abrahamic Covenant by natural birth, 123; but admission into the Covenant of Grace is by the second or spiritual birth, 123–4; infants not eligible for membership in the Churches on earth, although they are ready for heaven, 127–8; the Lord their Sole Pastor while they are unconscious and irresponsible, 129–30; He sanctifies them through suffering and the influence of His Spirit, 129–31; illustration of the value of this truth in checking blasphemy and rebellion, 131–4 note; infants can neither be admitted into a visible church, nor be made subject to its ordinances, 132; the violation of this truth is a source of superstition,

132; the dedication of children to God by their parents is not baptism, 133–4

J

Jerusalem, abundant supply of water in, 84–9
Joel ii. 28, remarks on, 52–3
John the Baptist, baptized in, and not with, the Jordan, 65–6; did not baptize all the multitudes with his own hands, 69; other alleged difficulties connected with his baptism explained, 70–1; did not, apparently, baptize women, 71; modern baptism of multitudes in the Jordan, described by Lynch, 72–5; also by Dean Stanley, 74 note

M

Majorities, not safe guides in spiritual matters, 7
Midwifery, Roman Catholic, superstitious and cruel practice in, 159–61
Moses, consequence of his neglect to circumcise his son, 169–73

N

Newman, F., effect produced on, by study of Wall's History of Infant-baptism, 11–2
[redacted]
Novatian, ordination of, opposed, because he was a clinic, 31

O

Obedience, importance of, 2, 3; not the rule in the nominal Church, 37

P

Peter, appeal of, to the Jews gives as the Divine order—repentance, baptism in water, baptism in the Spirit, 81–2
Pet. (1.) iii. 20–1, exposition of, 60–3
Pools, public, in Jerusalem, 84–6
Pouring on, or sprinkling, allowed in the early Church only in cases of illness or deficiency of water, 30–1

R

Reproach of Egypt, the, 176
Reservoirs, underground, in Jerusalem, 86; probable date of, 88
*Rhaino, perirhaino,* and *rhantizo,* in the Septuagint, and in Heb. ix. 13, 22, 23
Rites, importance of form of, 3
Rom. vi. 3, 4, exposition of, 99, 100; refers to baptism in water, not to baptism in the Spirit, 101–3
Running water, preferred for baptism by the early Christians, 29 note

S

*Sight of Hell, A*, by Father Furniss, 162–3
Signs of the nearness of the end, 178–81
Spirits of the air, four ways in which they influence men for evil, 152–68
Spirit, the Holy, two operations of, 103–4
Sprinkling, in place of immersion, advocates of, a vast majority, 6; in Ezek. xxxvi. 25, is Israelitish and not Christian, 53–4; in Isa. lii. 15, is a mistranslation, 54–5
Sprinklings, Mosaic, afford no precedent for this Dispensation, 45–6
Superstition, sacramental, incident showing its failure in time of need, 154–8; in the case of baptism, evolves three other errors, 158–63

T

Trine immersion, probable origin and subsequent explanation of, 35

U

Unbaptized babe, Roman Catholic description of its torture in Hell, 162–3

W

Wall, Dr., his method of defending infant-baptism, 9, 10; serious error presupposed in it, 10

Z

Zipporah, her repugnance to circumcision, 170–3; used a flint, not a stone-knife, 172 note

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.

## *WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*

*Tenth Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.*

# EARTH'S EARLIEST AGES,

## And their Connection with Modern Spiritualism and Theosophy.

"The 220 pages of the book on Spiritualism and the modern movement of an occult Theosophy are very remarkable and startling."—*Christian.*

"Wonderfully instructive in its own line. We would not willingly have missed the reading of such a book."—*Sword and Trowel.*

"The book is full of curious and interesting speculations, and is not without very important lessons."—*Baptist.*

*Second Edition. Price 1s., cloth.*

# THEOSOPHY, BUDDHISM, AND THE SIGNS OF THE END.

## Extracted from *Earth's Earliest Ages.*

"It sets forth clearly and concisely the characteristics of Theosophy, its errors from the Christian standpoint and its relationship to Buddhism; whilst the near approach of 'the end' is briefly argued from these and kindred signs."—*Methodist Recorder.*

"Mr. Pember writes with great vivacity and force, and provokes intelligent thinking, whether he secures assent or the spirit of controversy."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

"It will be found extremely interesting and clearly written."—*Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

LONDON: HODDER & STOUGHTON, 27 PATERNOSTER ROW.

## *WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*

*Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.*

# THE CHURCH, THE CHURCHES AND THE MYSTERIES;

## Or, Revelation and Corruption.

"A new book by the learned author of *Earth's Earliest Ages* is sure to deserve careful reading, and this is true of Mr. Pember's latest work. . . . In a word, Mr. Pember has written a work of distinct value, one that requires very careful and thoughtful study."—*Rock.*

*Fifth Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.*

# THE GREAT PROPHECIES OF THE CENTURIES CONCERNING ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES.

*With Two Coloured Diagrams.*

"We cannot fail to acknowledge our indebtedness to this most valuable and interesting book."—*Church Family Newspaper.*

"This is one of the most comprehensive of all the books on prophecy that have recently appeared. Evidently the author has given much attention to the subject under consideration, and from his point of view he certainly writes a very readable and interesting book."—*Christian Commonwealth.*

"A fine, studious volume, betraying the marks of great ability, combined with colossal research, and deep reverence of spirit for the Scriptures."—*Word and Work.*

"His exposition of the prophecies of the Old Testament is both painstaking and thorough. . . . The history which he brings to light is of surpassing interest."—*Church Bells.*

LONDON: HODDER & STOUGHTON, 27 PATERNOSTER ROW.

DATE DUE

DEC 4 1974
JAN 2 1975
7/26/76
MAY 16 1977
6-11-80

265.1
P394

Pember, George Hawkins.
AUTHOR

The Lord's command.
TITLE

37828

265.1
P394 Pember, George Hawkins.
The Lord's command.

37828